Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

Monday, October 11, 2004
Volume 40—Number 41
Pages 2209–2288

Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Bill Signings
Iowa
Discussion in Clive—2244
Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004, signing in Des Moines—2242
Michigan, remarks in Farmington Hills—2268
New Hampshire, remarks in Manchester—2209
Ohio
Discussion in Mansfield—2223
National Association of Home Builders in Columbus—2217
Remarks in Cuyahoga Falls—2235
Pennsylvania, remarks in Wilkes-Barre—2262
Radio address—2222
Report on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction—2275
Wisconsin
Departure for Wausau—2275
Remarks in Wausau—2276

Bill Signings

Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004, remarks in Des Moines, IA—2242

Communications to Congress

Budget request to support comprehensive response and recovery efforts after Hurricane Jeanne, letter transmitting—2262

Communications to Federal Agencies

Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended—2284

Proclamations

Child Health Day—2259
Fire Prevention Week—2259
German-American Day—2275
Leif Erikson Day—2283
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month—2216
To Implement the 2004 United States-Israel Agreement on Trade in Agricultural Products—2260

Statements by the President

Congress
House of Representatives action on legislation to reinstate the draft—2261
Senate passage of the "National Intelligence Reform Act"—2274
Death of Gordon Cooper—2261
Egypt, terrorist attacks—2284

Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—2287
Checklist of White House press releases—2287
Digest of other White House announcements—2284
Nominations submitted to the Senate—2286

Editor's Note: The President was in St. Louis, MO, on October 8, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for $80.00 per year ($137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for $93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is $3.00 ($3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html.

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

Week Ending Friday, October 8, 2004

Remarks in Manchester, New Hampshire

October 1, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you all coming. Thanks. It's great to be back in the great State of New Hampshire.

So guess what happened? We pulled up in our entourage, and I opened the door. I come bounding in the tent, and Mother's there checking up on me. They said—you know, sometimes they say I get a little too blunt, reminds me of the time a woman in Texas said, "Well, you got your daddy's eyes and your mother's mouth." [*Laughter*] I love you, Mom. Thanks for coming.

I'm keeping really good company up here on the stage. First, I'm proud to be standing with your great United States Senator, Judd Gregg. He's as solid as the granite in this State. I know you're going to send him back for 6 more years.

And I'm proud to be in New Hampshire with John McCain. What a fine American he is and a good friend. He told me a little something about New Hampshire politics—in case you forgot. [*Laughter*] I didn't. I picked up on the lessons and carried the State of New Hampshire in 2000, and with your help, we'll carry it again in 2004.

We had a great debate last night. It highlighted some fundamental differences between my opponent and me, differences I believe are crucial to our Nation's national security. First of all, there's a big difference when it comes to supporting our troops in harm's way. When America puts our troops in combat, I believe they deserve the best training, the best equipment, the full support of our Government. Last night my opponent said our troops deserve better. They certainly deserve better than they got from Senator Kerry when he voted to send them to war, then voting—voted against funding our troops in combat.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You may remember his quote when they asked him about his vote. He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] Not a lot of people in New Hampshire talk that way. Last night he said he had made a mistake in how he talked about that vote. I don't know if you remember that part of the debate or not. I certainly do. But the mistake wasn't what Senator Kerry said. The mistake was what Senator Kerry did.

During the course of this campaign, they kept asking him to explain the vote. He said the famous quote. Then he went on and said he was proud of his vote. He said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." And earlier this week he gave yet another explanation of his vote. He said, "Well, it was a protest vote." [*Laughter*] Exactly what he said, "protest vote."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When we put American troops in harm's way, they certainly deserve better than to have a candidate for President use them as a protest.

Last night was very revealing. He continued his pattern of confusing contradictions. After voting for the war, after saying my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, he now said it was all a mistake. But asked a logical question, "Does that mean our troops are dying for a mistake," he said, "No." You can't have it both ways. You can't say it's a mistake and not a mistake. You can't be for getting rid of Saddam Hussein when things look good and against it when times are difficult. You can't claim terrorists are pouring across the border into Iraq yet, at the same time, try to claim that Iraq is somehow a diversion from the war on terror. The American President must speak clearly, and when he speaks, must mean what he says.

The crucial difference between my opponent and me is the most important question for voters in this election, and that is: Who can lead this war against terror to victory? And here my opponent has a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of this war against terror, and he has no plan to win in Iraq. The cornerstone of Senator Kerry's plan for Iraq is to convene a summit. That's what he said. Now, look, I've been to a lot of summits. [*Laughter*] Since I've been your President, I've been honored to be at summits throughout the world. I've never been to a meeting that has deposed a tyrant or brought a terrorist to justice. The way to defeat the terrorists is to stay on the offense and bring them to justice.

My opponent last night claims he can work with our allies. Yet he said those who are standing with us are not a part of a genuine coalition.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He earlier called them a "coalition of the coerced and bribed" and dismissed their sacrifices as "window dressings."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. See, you cannot lead by pushing away the allies who are already with us, who are sacrificing along with our soldiers. You can't expect any support for a cause you have called a "mistake," a "grand diversion," or "the wrong war at the wrong time." As I said last night, I've been meeting with these leaders around the world. Imagine walking into a room, and say, "Get your sons to sacrifice and your daughters to sacrifice for the wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time." Imagine. [*Laughter*] The way to lead this coalition is not to be disdainful or dismissive. The way to lead this coalition to victory is to be clear about our thinking, grateful for their sacrifices, and resolute in our determination to achieve victory.

Let me say one other thing, one more thing I want to share with you about last night's debate. Perhaps it was the most disturbing aspect of the debate. Senator Kerry said that America has to pass some sort of "global test"——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——before we can use our troops to defend ourselves. Think about that. He wants our national security decisions subject to the approval of a foreign government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Listen, I'll continue to work with our allies. I'll work with the international community, but I will never submit America's national security to an international test. The President's job is not to take an international poll. The President's job is to defend the United States of America.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. I've come for more reasons than just to talk about last night's debate and to see my mother. [*Laughter*] I have come back to New Hampshire to ask for your vote, and I am here to ask for your help. I ask you to register your friends and neighbors. I ask you, then, to head them to the polls come the voting time. And as you do so, remind them if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I'm glad my mother is here, but I really wish Laura were here. What a great First Lady. You know, when I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you'll never have to give one." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. In New York, at our convention, America got to see a compassionate, strong, fine First Lady in Laura Bush.

And I'm proud—I'm proud I'm running with Dick Cheney. He's a fine man. I concede, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hair. I picked him because of his experience, his judgment, and because he can get the job done for the American people.

I want to sing the praises of your other United States Senator, John Sununu. You've got two really fine Senators in Judd and John, and I'm proud to work with them. They're kind of independent sometimes—[*laughter*]—just like the people of New Hampshire.

I appreciate your Governor, Craig Benson. I hope you put him back into office. Thanks for coming, Craig. I appreciate you being here, Craig. I'm proud of Congressman Jeb Bradley's work in the United States Congress, a fine Member of the House of Representatives. I want to thank Ted Gatsas and

his wife, Cassandra. I want to thank Brian Golden, who's a Democrats for Bush member from Massachusetts. I am honored you're here, Brian. Thank you for coming.

I want to thank all the other State and local officials. But most importantly, I want to thank the grassroots activists and those who are doing the hard work, getting ready to turn out the vote come November.

I appreciate the Oak Ridge Boys who are here with us today. I'm proud to call them friends. And I want to thank Kaleigh Cronin, the student from Manchester Central High, who performed the National Anthem. I want to thank Manchester Central High School Band for being here today. I'll try to keep my speech short so you can get home and do your homework. [*Laughter*]

Listen, I'm looking forward to this campaign. I like coming here to New Hampshire, and I'm coming back. I want to tell the people where I stand, what I believe, and where I'll lead this country for the next 4 years.

I believe every child can learn and every school must teach. That's what I believe. I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I didn't like the practice of having such low expectations that we would shuffle some children through the schools, grade after grade, year after year, without teaching them the basics. I know we can do better in America. So we changed the law to measure early, so we can solve problems. We believe in local control of schools. We're closing the achievement gap in America, and we're not going to go back to the old days of failed policy.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor our seniors with good health care. See, I went to Washington to fix problems. I saw a problem in Medicare. For example, Medicare would pay nearly $100,000 for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that might prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That wasn't fair to our seniors, and it wasn't fair to the taxpayers. We worked with Republicans and Democrats to modernize Medicare. Seniors will get prescription drug coverage in 2006, and we're not going back to the old days.

I believe in the energy and innovation and the spirit of America's workers, small-business owners, and farmers and ranchers. That's why we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation.

I want you to remind your friends and neighbors what this economy has been through. The stock market was heading down before Dick Cheney and I showed up in Washington. Then we had a recession just as soon as we showed up. And then we had some corporate scandals, which affected our economy. We passed tough laws. We've made it abundantly clear we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. And then the attacks came, of September the 11th, and that affected our economy.

But because we acted, our economy is growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in the State of New Hampshire is 3.7 percent.

I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I am running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer America, a safer world, and a more hopeful America. I am running with a compassionate conservative philosophy that Government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe this Nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership and that is why, with your help, we'll carry New Hampshire again and win a great victory in November.

But I understand the world in which we're living is changing. It wasn't all that long ago that a person in the workplace would have one job and one career, one pension plan, one retirement system, and that person was usually a man. The workplace has changed. Think about it. People are changing jobs. People are changing careers. Women are working inside the house and outside the house in America today. And yet, the fundamental systems of our Government, the Tax Code, the pension plans, health coverage,

and worker training, were designed for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow. I'm running to transform these systems so that all citizens are equipped, prepared, and truly free to be able to make your own choices and pursue your own dreams.

A hopeful country is one that has a growing economy. In order to keep jobs here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. If you want jobs here, this has got to be the best place in the world to risk capital. That means less regulations. That means legal reform to stop the frivolous lawsuits that are plaguing our employers.

We want to keep this economy growing and have jobs here in America, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation. It's a plan that spends money to make sure we do a better job with renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It's a plan that uses technology to burn coal in clean ways. It's a plan that uses technology to explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. It is a plan that recognizes this fact: To keep this economy growing, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

In order to keep jobs here in America, we must open up markets to U.S. products. We've opened up our markets for goods from overseas for a reason. It's good for our consumers. Think about this. If you've got more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price. That's how the market works. So rather than falling prey to economic isolationism, I'm saying to countries like China and elsewhere, "You treat us the way we treat you." I say that because I know when the rules are fair, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere in the world.

Finally, to make sure this economy continues to grow, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money in Washington, and we've got to keep your taxes low. Taxes are an issue in this campaign. I'm running against a fellow who lived right south from here. [*Laughter*] He's so far promised $2.2 trillion in new spending. That's a lot, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] So they said, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "That's easy. We're going to tax the rich." You've heard that before, haven't you?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. About every campaign. The problem with that, there's some flawed logic. You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for $2.2 trillion in new spending. There's what I would call a tax gap. Guess who gets to fill the tax gap?

Audience member. We do!

The President. Yes. I'll tell you something else about the rhetoric of taxing the rich. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason, so they can avoid the bill and stick you with it. The good news is, we're not going to let him tax you. We're going to win in November.

Speaking about the Tax Code, it's a complicated mess. It's full of special interest loopholes. It's a million pages long. Americans spend 6 billion hours a year filling out their tax forms.* In order to make sure this Tax Code is fair and simple, I'm going to call Republicans and Democrats together to do something about an antiquated Tax Code that needs to be changed.

Listen, we'll help our workers gain the skills of the 21st century. In a changing economy, sometimes there's a skills gap. Jobs are available, but workers don't have the skills necessary to fill the jobs. That's why I'm such a strong believer in the community college system. I believe—and I know that most new jobs in a changing economy are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, yet one in four of our students gets there. In our high schools, we'll fund early intervention programs to help at-risk students. We'll emphasize math and science. Over time, there ought to be a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and by expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, more Americans will start their career with a college diploma.

Let me talk about health care. There is a wide, philosophical divide when it comes to health care. Let me see if I can summarize it this way. My opponent wants the Government to run the health care——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

---

* White House correction.

The President. ——which would lead to high prices and rationing. I want you to make the decisions when it comes to health care. I have a practical, commonsense way of dealing with health care to make sure it's available and affordable. Let me give you some ideas.

First of all, most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Many small businesses are having trouble affording health care. We ought to change the law to allow small businesses to pool risk, so they can buy insurance at the same discounts big businesses can buy insurance for. We'll expand tax-free health savings accounts. We'll give small businesses tax credits to pay into health savings accounts for their employees. We'll help low-income, uninsured working Americans to afford health savings accounts. These are innovative ways to make sure people get good health care coverage with catastrophic coverage as well.

We will expand community health centers to every poor county in America so the poor and the indigent can get preventative and primary care in places other than emergency rooms of your hospitals. We'll make sure poor children are enrolled in our low-income children's programs. To make sure health care is available and affordable, we've got to do something about these junk lawsuits that are running good docs out of practice and running your costs of medicine up. In all we do reform health care, we'll make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

In changing times, ownership helps bring stability to people's lives. The homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high during my administration. I love that statistic. Think about it. More and more people are opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property." Over the next 4 years, we'll expand homeownership to every corner of America.

And I want to implement a part of ownership into the retirement system as well. You might remember some of the rhetoric that took place in 2000 when I was running. They said, "If George W. gets elected, he's going to take away your Social Security check." I don't know if you remember that or not. Well, you still got the check; nothing happened. What I'm telling you is, is that when I talk about Social Security reform, if you're a senior citizen on Social Security, you don't have to worry about your check. That's that same old stale rhetoric that they're going to put out every year. You'll get your check. Baby boomers like me, we'll probably get our checks, because the Social Security trust is that solvent.

But we need to worry about our children and grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own money and set up a personal savings account to make sure Social Security fulfills its promise, a personal savings account you call your own, a personal savings account the Government can never take away.

Listen, in this world of change, there are some things that won't change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In changing times, we'll support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our schools, our families, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And we stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election will also determine how America responds to continuing danger of terrorism. Since 2001—September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We'll transform our military. We'll keep the All-Volunteer Army an all-volunteer army.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Yes. We'll strengthen the intelligence services. We'll stay on the offensive. We'll defeat the terrorists around the Earth so we do not have to face them here at home. We'll continue to advance liberty in the broader Middle East and throughout the world, and we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about this: Four years ago, Afghanistan was the

home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for terrorists; Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering threat; and Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, Afghanistan is fighting terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting terror; and three-quarters of Al Qaida's leadership have been brought to justice.

This progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. The toughest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and support for terror. We knew that. I want you to remember that he harbored Abu Nidal, the leader of a terrorist organization that carried out attacks in Europe and Asia. We knew he harbored Abu Abbas, who killed American Leon Klinghoffer because of his religion. Zarqawi was in and out of Baghdad. He ordered the killing of an American citizen from Baghdad. We knew Saddam Hussein's long history of pursuing and using weapons of mass destruction. We knew that he would hope the world would turn away and not pay attention to him. We also knew that we must think differently after September the 11th. This country must take threats seriously before they fully materialize. That is a lesson we must never forget.

So I went to the United States Congress. The Congress looked at the same intelligence I looked at, remembered the same history I remembered, and concluded Saddam Hussein was a threat, and voted to authorize the use of force. My opponent looked at the same intelligence I looked at. He concluded that Saddam Hussein was a serious threat. He voted "yes" when it came to the authorization of force. He may not want to admit it today.

Before the Commander in Chief commits troops into harm's way, he must try all options, before military options. And so I went to the United Nations in hopes that diplomacy would work, in hopes that somehow the free world would finally convince Saddam Hussein to listen to the demands. The United Nations Security Council debated the issue and voted 15 to nothing to say to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." I believe that when an international body speaks, it must mean what it says, in order to keep this world peaceful. Saddam Hussein ignored the demands yet again.

Last night my opponent said, "Well, we probably should have"—not probably—"We should have taken more time and passed another resolution," as if number 18 would have convinced him. We sent inspectors in—the U.N. did—they were systematically deceived. That's what history shows. My opponent said, "We should have left the inspectors in there." Why? I don't know. Maybe Saddam could deceived them even more. The truth was diplomacy had failed. And so I now have a choice to make: Do I take the word of a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

We didn't find the stockpiles we thought would be there. We didn't find the stockpiles everybody thought would be there. But I want you to remember, Saddam still had the capability of making weapons of mass destruction. He could have passed that capability onto an enemy, and that is a risk we could not have afforded to have taken after September the 11th. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision. And the world is safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

Because we acted to defend our country, 50 million people now live in freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. Remember what it was like in Afghanistan some 3 years ago. People were living under the brutal reign of the Taliban. These people are—when I talk about ideologues of hate, that's what I'm talking about, people just like them. They would not let young girls go to school. They'd whip their mothers in the public square if they disagreed with their ideology of hate. They executed women in sports stadiums. They were barbaric and backwards, and they were harboring Al Qaida.

Today, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror, and 10 million people, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in the upcoming October Presidential election. Think about that for a minute. This

country has gone from darkness to light because of freedom, and America and the world are better for it.

In Iraq, we have got a plan to win this war against the terrorists. First of all, we've got an ally in the war and a strong leader in Prime Minister Allawi. Secondly, there will be national elections in January of 2005. We're continuing our reconstruction efforts over the next months to help rebuild that country. We'll continue to work with our allies and friends. There will be a donors summit in Japan next month. There will be a regional conference of neighbor—of countries in the neighborhood to work with Iraq. We will continue to train the Iraqis so they will do the hard work of defending their country against those who want to stop the advance of freedom. That is our strategy. We'll implement it as quickly as possible. We'll get this country on the road to stability and democracy, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

I am proud of our United States military, and I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. The other night, I said, "I am realistic about what's taking place in Iraq. I understand how hard it is. I'm optimistic we will succeed." I'm optimistic we'll succeed, and one of the main reasons why is because I do believe in the transformational power of liberty.

I'll tell you what I mean by that. Perhaps the best way to explain that to you is using this example. One of the leaders I enjoy meeting with is Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan—interesting fellow. I told him in New York when I saw him, I said, "Do you mind if I tell the people in my country that we've got a good relationship?" He said, "Fine." I didn't tell him I was going to tell you that his favorite singer was Elvis—[*laughter*]—interesting man and a friend.

Think about this, though, that I sit down and talk to this leader of Japan some 60 years after our Nation was at war with them. Sixty years isn't very long in the march of history. It's long if you're 58 years old. [*Laughter*] But I want you to think about that for a minute. My dad, your dads, your granddads fought against the Japanese, and yet today, I now sit down at the table with the Prime Minister.

See, fortunately, Harry Truman and other citizens of the country believed in the transformational power of liberty, that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally. And because they overwhelmed the skeptics and the doubters, I now sit at the table with a leader of a former foe talking about the peace we all want. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq, talking about keeping the peace. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their liberty. I believe women in the Middle East want to be free to realize their dreams, and they can raise their children in hopeful societies. I believe that if given the chance, people in the Middle East will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man, democracy. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. By reforming our systems of Government, we will help more Americans realize their dreams. We'll spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of this country. We'll pass the enduring values of our country to a new generation. We will continue to make the world more peaceful and more free.

For Americans—for all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time when we need firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that makes this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. The memories are vividly etched in my mind. There were workers in hardhats yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes."

I remember working the line, trying to comfort people coming out of that rubble, and a guy grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, that fateful day, I've woken up doing whatever I can to protect this country. I will never relent in defending you, whatever it takes.

Four years ago as I had the honor of traveling your State, I made this pledge, I said if you gave me the chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office. With your hard work, with your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

May God bless you, and may God bless our great country. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:58 p.m. at the McIntyre Ski Area. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Craig Benson of New Hampshire; New Hampshire State Senator Theodore L. Gatsas and his wife, Cassandra; Massachusetts State Representative Brian Paul Golden; country music entertainers the Oak Ridge Boys; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7823—National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, 2004

October 1, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we raise awareness of this deadly disease, encourage early detection, and support research to find a cure.

Prevention and early detection are key to winning the fight against breast cancer. Although the exact cause of the disease is unknown, factors that can affect the risk of developing cancer include age, general health, and family history. This year, estimates are that over 200,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Regular screening for breast cancer continues to be the most effective way to detect this disease early and to save lives, and mammograms are the best screening tool we currently have. Women should talk to their health care providers about their breast cancer risk.

To improve the quality of life and find a cure for those affected by breast cancer, we are learning more about its causes. The National Institutes of Health has invested an estimated $700 million this year alone on breast cancer research and will spend more next year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has devoted over $200 million this year and more next year for an early detection program that promotes mammograms and helps low-income women afford screenings for breast and cervical cancer. The Department of Defense also invested approximately $150 million for its Breast Cancer Research program in 2004. This funding will help lead to better treatments for cancer patients and new hope for countless Americans and their families.

We salute breast cancer survivors for their courage and perseverance. Their courageous battle against cancer is an inspiration to countless Americans, and their willingness to share their stories and experiences helps spread awareness and offers hope and comfort to cancer patients across the country. Together with health care professionals, researchers, and family members, we can improve the lives of those suffering from this disease and win the fight against breast cancer.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2004 as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon Government officials, businesses, communities, health care professionals, educators, volunteers, and all the people of the United States to continue our Nation's strong commitment to controlling and curing breast cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 5, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 2, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 6.

Remarks to the National Association of Home Builders in Columbus, Ohio

October 2, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you all.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thanks a lot. Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate being with the homebuilders from all across our country. It's a good way to spend a Saturday morning. [*Laughter*] I'm proud to be back in the State capital of Ohio.

I don't know if you know this or not, but my great grandfather built a home right here in Columbus, on Roxbury Road. The homebuilder they hired did a good job. [*Laughter*] The house still stands. [*Laughter*] My grandfather was born in this city back in 1895, so I hope a month from now the Ohio voters will send a home boy back to Washington.

For millions of our citizens, the American Dream starts with owning a home. Homeownership gives people a sense of pride and independence and confidence for the future. When you work hard, like you've done, and there are good policies coming out of our Nation's Capital, we're creating a home—an ownership society in this country where more Americans than ever will be able to open up their door where they live and say, "Welcome to my house. Welcome to my piece of property."

I was in Florida this week. And I've been there quite often because of the hurricanes, and I want to thank you for the good work that the homebuilders are doing for the people of that State. Homebuilders have collected donations of cash and building materials for families that have lost so much. They've established an online disaster contractor network to help put homeowners in touch with licensed contractors and with Government officials who can help those people that have been hurt by these storms.

The Federal Government is also doing its part, along with State and local authorities. Florida has been through a terrible time. And so have many communities here in Ohio, that have suffered severe flooding caused by the hurricanes. We've issued disaster declarations for 20 counties in Ohio, making residents whose homes have been damaged or destroyed eligible for assistance. In Florida, Ohio, and other storm-damaged—ravaged States, we will not rest until life is back to normal, the damage repaired, and the homes are rebuilt.

Laura sends her best. When I asked her to marry me, she was a public school librarian in Texas. [*Applause*] There you are. Just wanted to see if any of the home State folks are here. [*Laughter*] I know Conine is here. [*Laughter*] She said, "Fine, I'll marry you, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. The American people are learning what I know: She's a compassionate, decent, strong First Lady for our country.

I want to thank Bobby Rayburn and Annette for their invitation and their leadership of this important group. I appreciate the board of directors who are here today. I want to thank the guests who are here today.

I'm traveling today with Senator Mike DeWine from the State of Ohio, who is a fine United States Senator. I appreciate you coming, Mike. Congressman Dave Hobson and Carolyn are with us today. Thank you for coming, Congressman. I appreciate you being here. Congressman Pat Tiberi is here. Thank you for coming, Pat. I'm proud you're here. He brought his mother, Rina, with him.

Yesterday I was in New Hampshire speaking, and Mother showed up. [*Laughter*] Just wanted to make sure she could continue giving me some instructions. [*Laughter*] Tiberi, my only advice to you is do what I do, and that's listen to your mother. [*Laughter*] I appreciate your dad, Joe, being here, and your sister.

I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor from this State being here, Jennette Bradley, and happy birthday to you, Governor. I appreciate it. Betty Montgomery, the State auditor is here. I know there's other local officials and State officials. We all appreciate you being here today.

Today when I landed at the airport, I met Karen Kindron. You've probably never heard of Karen, but let me tell you about her. She is an active volunteer in what's called Rebuilding Together of Columbus. She is a soldier in the army of compassion. She is the kind of person who's heard the universal call to love a neighbor. She represents the true strength of America, which is the hearts and souls of our citizens. The program for which she volunteers helps low-income, elderly, and disabled homeowners. They help them obtain services such as weatherization and repair work. Since founded in 1988, over 2 million volunteers have rehabilitated 87,000 homes and facilities. America can change one heart and one soul at a time for the better because of the volunteers all across our country who are making a difference. And I want to thank Karen. Where are you, Karen? She's somewhere. Anyway, she's here, and I thank her for setting such a good example. Thank you, Karen, appreciate it.

We're nearing an historic national election in 31 days—who's counting? [*Laughter*] Americans will go to the polls to determine the direction of this great Nation for the next 4 years. I'm looking forward to these final weeks of the campaign. I really am. I like to get out amongst the people, and I'm going to tell you where I stand and what I believe and where I'll lead this Nation.

I believe it is the job of a President to confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. And in the last 4 years, we have faced some problems. We faced a recession, corporate scandal. We passed tough laws now that make it abundantly clear, we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. We faced a terrorist attack and war. Because we confronted these challenges with focus and resolve, our Nation is on the path to a better future. If America shows weakness or uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This is not going to happen on my watch.

We're going after the terrorists. We will hunt them down where they plot and plan, and we're making progress. Today, more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice. I have the solemn duty to protect the homeland, and we'll do everything we can here at home to protect you. But the best way to protect the homeland is to stay on the offensive, fighting the terrorists overseas so we do not have to face them here in America.

But I understand this: To make sure our children and grandchildren grow up in a hopeful, peaceful world, this country must continue to spread freedom and liberty. Freedom in Afghanistan—10 million citizens in that country that was once ruled by the barbarians, the Taliban, have registered to vote, 41 percent of whom are women, in the upcoming Presidential elections. Freedom is on the march.

We'll continue to work for a free society in Iraq. It's hard work there. You know it's hard, and I know it's hard. It's hard for a reason, because the terrorists fear freedom. Liberty will transform societies. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq talking about the peace, and our children and grandchildren will be able to grow up in a more peaceful world. In the long run, our interests are served by spreading freedom and liberty and, therefore, spreading peace.

There are clear differences in this campaign. In the debate Thursday night, my opponent continued his pattern of confusing contradictions on Iraq. After voting for the war, after saying my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, he now says it was all a mistake. Then he was asked if our troops were dying for a mistake. He said, "No." You can't have it both ways. You can't say it's a mistake and not a mistake. You can't be for getting rid of Saddam Hussein when things look good and against it when times are hard. You can't claim terrorists are pouring across the border into Iraq yet, at the same time, try to claim that Iraq is somehow a diversion from the war against terrorism. A President cannot keep changing his mind. A President must be consistent. A President must speak clearly, and a President must mean what he says.

In the debate, Senator Kerry also said something revealing when he laid out the Kerry doctrine. He said that America has to pass a "global test" before we can use American troops to defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's what he said. [*Laughter*] Think about this, Senator Kerry's approach to foreign policy would give foreign governments veto power over our national security decisions. I have a different view. When our country is in danger, the President's job is not to take an international poll. The President's job is to defend America. I'll continue to work every day with our friends and allies for the sake of freedom and peace. But our national security decisions will be made in the Oval Office, not in foreign capitals.

We have hard work ahead to do our duty. But by being steadfast and resolved, we will prevail. And as we defend our great country, we will continue strengthening our Nation here at home.

To grow this economy and unleash the spirit of enterprise, to overcome the obstacles I described earlier, we passed the largest tax relief in a generation. And that tax relief has made a big difference for a lot of you all. See, many homebuilders are small businesses. Many homebuilders are—represent the great entrepreneurial spirit of America. Among the members of the National Association of Home Builders, 63 percent of you are either Subchapter S or sole proprietorships, which means you pay your taxes at the individual income-tax rate. Just like a lot of other small businesses in America do.

And so when we passed tax relief by cutting rates on everybody who pay taxes, we helped our small businesses; we helped our homebuilders. We helped you with resources to build or grow and expand and hire more workers. By cutting taxes on dividends and capital gains, we encouraged savings and investment, which is crucial to your industry. Tax relief left more money in the hands of American workers so they could save, spend, invest, and help drive this economy forward.

The economic recovery plan of ours is working. The results are clear for all to see. Over the past year, America has added 1.7 million jobs. We've added 107,000 manufacturing jobs since January. The national unemployment rate is down to 5.4 percent, nearly a full point below the rate in the summer of 2003 and below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

Inflation is low. Mortgage and interest rates are near historic lows. Our economy is growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years, spreading opportunity and prosperity across this country. And the homebuilders of America have helped lead the recovery in America.

The tax relief has helped many be able to put money down to buy a home. As well, my administration has worked to expand homeownership in other ways. Last December, I signed the American Dream Down Payment Act, which will help thousands of low-income families afford the downpayment and closing costs on their first home. We want people in every corner of America owning a home.

We've doubled funding for education and counseling services to help first-time homebuyers navigate the lending process, understand the fine print, and avoid predatory lenders. Homeownership rates are an alltime high in America, nearly 70 percent. I love that statistic. [*Laughter*] Think about that. More and more people own a home in America. More and more people have a chance to realize the great dream of our country. Minority homeownership is at record levels as well. In 2002, I set a clear goal, 5.5 million new minority homeowners by the end of the decade. And in just 2 years, more than 1.6 million minorities have become homeowners. America is a stronger country every single time a family moves into a house of their own.

The fundamental question in this campaign is how do we make the recovery lasting—to lasting prosperity? To create more jobs in America, to make sure people can find work, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on the entrepreneurs. To create jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It's a plan that encourages conservation and renewable sources, but it's a plan that uses technology so we can burn coal and explore for natural gas. To make sure our economy remains strong and people can find work in America, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To make sure this economy remains strong, we've got to reject economic isolationism. We have opened up our markets for

products from overseas, and that's good for the consumer. If a person has more choices, he or she is likely to get the product they want at better quality and lower price. That's how the marketplace works. So I'm saying to other countries like China and elsewhere, "Treat us the way we treat you. Open up your markets for our farmers, ranchers, and entrepreneurs." We can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

To make sure that jobs exist here in America people can find work, we've got to protect our small-business owners and workers from the junk lawsuits that threaten jobs across America. I don't think you can be pro-homebuilder, pro-small-business, pro-entrepreneur, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made a choice. He put a trial lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I'm for legal reform to make sure this economy continues forward.

I've worked with Congress to create opportunity zones, which will provide extra tax relief and regulatory relief and other incentives for businesses to help our communities that have lost manufacturing and textile and other jobs to get back on their feet. We'll keep this economy growing until prosperity reaches every corner of America.

And I've set another great goal, and that's to build an ownership society, where everyone has a chance to own a home and a retirement account or health care plan and to gain a permanent stake in the American Dream. I believe expanded ownership is necessary for a lot of reasons, and one of the main reasons is because the times in which we live and work are changing dramatically.

Think about our society today compared to the society of our grandparents and parents. The workers of our parents' and grandparents' generation typically had only one job, one skill, one career, often with one company that provided health care and a pension. Today, people are changing jobs and careers quite often, and the workforce has changed. Women work inside the house and now outside the house. Yet, the fundamental systems of Government, the health care plans, the pension plans, the Tax Code, the worker training programs, were designed for yesterday, not for tomorrow.

I'm running for office to help people be able to realize their dreams by changing the fundamental systems of Government. And in times of change, I understand that ownership brings stability to our neighborhoods and security to our families. In changing times, it helps if you own something. It helps bring security to you. By paying a mortgage instead of rent, by putting money into your own retirement plan, you're storing up wealth for your family. And that nest egg grows in value, and you can pass it on to your children or your grandchildren.

To build an ownership society, we'll help even more Americans buy homes. Some families are more than able to pay a mortgage but just don't have the savings to put money down. We'll continue to help them realize their dreams with a downpayment. So I'm asking Congress to pass my Zero-Downpayment Initiative. We should remove the 3 percent downpayment rule for first-time homebuyers with FHA-insured mortgages. This change could help as many as 150,000 people become homeowners in the first year alone.

To help low- to moderate-income rural families purchase homes, I've requested $2.7 billion in loan guarantees and 1.1 billion for direct loans to low-income borrowers that can't get bank loans. These initiatives will help thousands in rural communities across America achieve the dream of homeownership.

Adding more qualified buyers won't accomplish much if there are no affordable homes to buy. My administration has set a goal of 7 million more affordable homes in the next 10 years. To help reach that goal, I've asked Congress to pass the single family housing affordable tax credit to help you build between 40 and 50 thousand new affordable homes every year.

I understand that the regulatory barriers at the Federal, State, and local levels can add as much as 35 percent of the cost to the homes. In order to make sure there's more affordable homes, we must remove the regulatory barriers on our homebuilders. I understand there's a need for sensible regulation, but when you have overlapping regulations that send confusing signals, when you have

the Federal Government, the State government, the local governments creating obstacles for homebuilding, it is time to reduce those regulations.

Finally, I believe that the mortgage interest deduction enables more Americans to achieve the goal of homeownership. It is an important part of our Tax Code.

To build an ownership society, we should help our fellow citizens get health care, especially coverage for themselves. More than one-half of the uninsured in America are small-business employees and their families. To make sure they get help, we must allow small firms to join together through association health plans so they can purchase insurance for their employees at the same discounts that big businesses are able to do so. And I appreciate your homebuilders—the homebuilders for supporting this initiative.

We will offer a tax credit to encourage small businesses and their employees to set up health savings accounts. We'll provide help—direct help for low-income Americans to purchase health savings accounts. Health savings accounts—and I urge you to look into them—give workers the security of insurance against major illness, the opportunity to save tax-free for routine health expenses, and the freedom of knowing that you own your own account that you can take with you wherever you—whenever you change jobs.

And finally, in order to make sure—and another practical commonsense way to make sure health care is available and affordable, is to stop these frivolous lawsuits that are running good docs out of business and running up the cost of your health care. By making this medical liability issue a significant part of the campaign, by talking about every single stop, by reminding people about what these lawsuits do to their health care, I am confident that in the next 4 years, we'll get medical liability reform out of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. In all we do to improve health care, we'll make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in the Nation's Capital.

To build an ownership society, we've got to reform and strengthen our retirement system. I remember campaigning in 2000, and people tell me where they saw the TV ad they were running that said, "If George W. gets elected, our seniors aren't going to get their Social Security checks." So I'm going around the country reminding the seniors they got their checks. [*Laughter*]

With the baby boomer generation approaching retirement, many of our children and grandchildren understandably worry whether Social Security will be there when they need it. Social Security is in good shape for our seniors, and Social Security is in good shape for baby boomers like me. But we need to worry about our children and grandchildren. And so I believe we ought to strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their taxes in a personal account, a nest egg they can call their own that the Government cannot take away.

In all these proposals, we seek to provide not just a Government program but a path to greater opportunity and more freedom and more control over your own life. And here, as on so many other issues, there's a big difference between my opponent and me. Senator Kerry voted against tax deductible health savings accounts. He voted against expanding personal retirement savings accounts. He opposes our proposals to strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to put some of their taxes into personal accounts that they control. He opposes our plan to allow small businesses to join together to purchase health insurance at the discounts available to big companies. There's a pattern here. [*Laughter*] On just about every proposal to empower the individual instead of Government, my opponent has voted "no."

A few weeks ago, Senator Kerry gave a speech in Detroit to lay our his economic agenda. Not once in that speech did he mention expanding ownership, not a word on how we would help more Americans own their own homes or stocks or savings accounts. Instead, his agenda focuses on expanding the scope and power of the Government. He has decided to put his faith in the wisdom of the Government. I will always put my faith in the wisdom of the American people.

Senator Kerry has spent almost 20 years in the Federal Government, and he's concluded that it just isn't big enough. [*Laughter*] On the campaign trail, he has proposed more than 2 trillion in new Federal spending so far. [*Laughter*] And that's a lot, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] And he said—they asked him, "Well, how are you going to pay for it?" He said, "By raising taxes on the rich. By raising taxes on the wealthiest 2 percent of the population." We've heard that rhetoric before, "raising taxes on the rich." There's one problem with that, that the tax increase would bring only in about $600 billion of revenue. And he wants to spend more than 2 trillion, so there's a tax gap. And guess who gets to fill the tax gap? Yes, you do. That's what happens. People make wild promises, and they can't pay for it, and then they're going to raise your taxes to pay for it.

He also doesn't understand when he's saying tax the so-called-rich, he's raising the taxes on the small-business owners of America. My opponent's plan would raise taxes on over 900,000 small-business owners, the Subchapter S corporations, the sole proprietorships, people just like you. Small businesses are the engine of job creation in our country. Small businesses create 7 out of every 10 new jobs. It makes no sense to tax the job creators as our economy is getting stronger. We should not punish free enterprise. We ought to encourage free enterprise in America.

Now, I've got a plan to help this country move forward. I believe tax—the tax relief we passed ought to be made permanent. I've got a practical way to make sure Americans get health coverage without empowering the Federal Government. We've got a clear view of how to make sure Social Security fulfills its promise to our younger folks. We're going to help more families find dignity and independence in a home they call their own. We're going to build an ownership society, where everyone has a stake in the success of America and everyone has a chance to realize the great promise of our country.

And you're helping people realizing that success. It must be a fantastic feeling to be a part of the American Dream. It must be great to see—it must be magnificent to see somebody walk in to their home and feel the pride of ownership, the fantastic feeling of saying to a son or daughter, "Here's your room. Here's our piece of property."

I want to thank you very much for what you're doing. I want to thank you for helping pull our economy through some tough times and helping this Nation get on that hopeful path for a bright future. I appreciate your hard work. I appreciate your optimism. I appreciate your love for America.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:01 a.m. at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to C. Kent Conine, immediate past president, and Bobby Rayburn, president, National Association of Home Builders; Carolyn Hobson, wife of Representative David L. Hobson; and Lt. Gov. Jennette Bradley and Auditor of State Betty Montgomery of Ohio.

The President's Radio Address

October 2, 2004

Good morning. Next week in Iowa, I will proudly sign the Working Families Tax Relief Act. This bipartisan law is good news for America's families. It keeps in place major portions of the tax relief we passed over the last 3 years. It preserves marriage penalty relief, the $1,000 child tax credit, and the expanded 10-percent tax bracket. The law also increases the refund limit on the child tax credit, which means about 7 million low-income families will get higher refund checks next year.

Because we acted, 94 million Americans will have a lower tax bill again next year, including 70 million women and 38 million families with children. I met many families that are benefiting from tax relief, including Gary and Angela Brown, from Springfield, Missouri. Gary works at a manufacturing company, and Angela stays at home with their four children. Last year, the Browns saved about $3,000 on their taxes. They used some of that money to put a downpayment on braces for their daughter. If Congress had not extended tax relief, the Brown's tax bill would have gone up $1,500 next year. Now, because we acted, they will be able to keep and use that money. Tax relief has helped

millions of families, like the Browns, to spend, save, and invest for the future. Thanks to their hard work, America's economy is strong and getting stronger.

This week brought more evidence that tax relief is helping our entire economy move forward. The economy grew at an annual rate of 3.3 percent in the second quarter. America's economy has been growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. And for 12 consecutive months, our economy has been creating jobs. We've added 1.7 million jobs since August, 2003, including 107,000 manufacturing jobs since January.

The unemployment rate is now 5.4 percent, down almost a full point since June, 2003, and below the average rate of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high, and new home sales are still rising. After-tax income is increasing, which means workers are keeping more of their paychecks. The tax relief we passed is working.

Having extended tax relief, we must take additional action to strengthen our economy so every American who wants to work can find a job. To create more jobs, we need to reduce the burden of regulation on small businesses. We need to end the junk lawsuits that keep entrepreneurs from creating new jobs. Congress needs to pass my energy plan to make America less dependent on foreign sources of oil. We need to open more foreign markets to American products and ensure that other countries play by the rules. We must continue to spend taxpayer dollars wisely in Washington, DC. And to help families and small businesses plan with confidence, we need to make all of the tax relief permanent.

Some politicians in Washington have a different view of tax relief. When I proposed tax relief for working families in 2001 and 2003, Senator Kerry and other Democratic leaders voted against it. In fact, Senator Kerry has voted consistently against marriage penalty relief, against increasing the child tax credit, and against expanding the 10-percent bracket. Now, Senator Kerry and the Democrat leaders are proposing a lot of new Federal spending, and the only way to pay for all their promises is to raise taxes on working families.

You know where I stand. Higher taxes are the wrong policy for this growing economy. Our families and our country are better off when Government lets people keep more of what they earn. And that is why I'll work with Congress to keep taxes low, and that is why I will proudly sign the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 into law.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2 p.m. on October 1 in Bedford, NH, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in a Discussion in Mansfield, Ohio

October 2, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for being here.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all for coming. I'm proud you're here. Go ahead and be seated. Thank you all. Thanks for coming.

It's great to be here in Mansfield. It's an honor to be back in the State of Ohio. You might have noticed I'm spending some quality time here. [*Laughter*] And there's a reason. I believe you have to get out amongst the people and ask for the vote, and that's what I'm doing here today. I'm here to say, I'd like your vote. And I'm also here to ask for your help.

Audience member. You got it!

The President. I appreciate it. [*Laughter*] I want to thank all those who are involved in the grassroots politics here. I know our party chairman is here. I know there's a lot of people putting up the signs and making the phone calls. I know people worked hard to turn out such a great crowd, and I thank you for it.

I'm going to thank you now for what you're going to do, which is to register people to vote. Don't overlook discerning Democrats like Zell Miller when you do so. And then remind people that in our free society, we

have an obligation to vote. And then when you get them headed to the polls, tell them if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all. Got a lot of work to do here. [*Laughter*] I'm here to let you know I have a reason for wanting to serve for 4 more years. It's important for a person running for office to say, "Here's what I've done," but only to verify that which I'm going to do. And that's what we're here to talk about. I appreciate you giving me a chance to come. As you can tell, we've got some citizens from the area here who are going to help illuminate the points about the approach to Government that I take, which is, the role of Government is to help people realize their dreams, not tell people how to live their lives.

And that's a fundamental difference in this campaign. It's a fundamental difference. I'm running against a fellow who trusts Government. I trust the people. And we're going to spend some time talking about it.

Before I do so, I want to tell you, Laura sent her best. She was a public school librarian in Texas when I asked her to marry me. She said, "Okay, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "You've got a deal." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to my promise. [*Laughter*] People of this country got to see her in New York City. They got to see the woman I know—decent, compassionate, strong, and a great First Lady. She said, hi. I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back into office, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura will be your First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud of my Vice President. He's been a great friend and a good adviser. I admit it, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him for his hair. [*Laughter*] I picked him because he's got good judgment; he's got great experience. I picked him because he's getting the job done for the American people.

I'm proud Oxley's here. I know you're proud to have him as your Congressman. Mike Oxley is a fine, fine man. Thanks, Ox. And I see the chairman is with us, Ralph Regula. Thank you, Ralph, for coming as well. Appreciate both of you here. I just got off the bus, and Mike DeWine went up the road. He is the warm-up person for the next speech, but he sends his best. Mike's a great United States Senator, and I hope you understand what a great Senator you have in George Voinovich. Please put him back into office. Thanks for coming.

Let me—a couple of things I want to say to you. One, as you're gathering up the vote, it's important for you to remind your fellow citizens what this country has been through for the last 3½ years and the fact that we have taken decisive action to deal with the issues that have confronted us. Take the economy. When we got in there, the stock market had been in decline for a while. It was kind of an indication of things to come, and then there was a recession. Recession, of course, means that small-business owners have trouble making payroll, that people are just—great uncertainty, that people are worried about their jobs. And then, just as we were beginning to get our balance in the recession, we found out that some of our citizens were not responsible citizens. They didn't tell the truth, and that affected our economy. Make no mistake about it, those corporate scandals affected the economic vitality of this country. So we acted. It's called the Sarbanes-Oxley bill. It's a bill that says we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. And then after that, the enemy hit us, and it cost us jobs. The attacks of September the 11th caused a lot of grief, a lot of concern. It caused us to change our—aspects of our foreign policy, which I'll talk about in a little bit, but it hurt our economy.

There have been major obstacles in the path for economic success, yet we've overcome them. We've overcome them because the entrepreneurial spirit in America is strong. We've overcome it because our small-business owners are optimistic people. We've overcome it because we've got great workers in America. And we've overcome it because of well-timed tax cuts.

We're going to talk a little bit today about how the tax relief helped individual families as well as the small-business owners. The

economy of this country is strong, and it's getting stronger. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. We're growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. I understand there's pockets of unemployment here in Ohio. It's been tough on this State, and I know that. That's why progrowth policies will help. You'll hear other ways to help the people who are hurting here. So long as anybody is looking for work, I'll continue to make sure this economy has got what it takes to grow.

Now, let me tell you about our economy. It's one thing to have overcome obstacles; the question is, how do you make sure the growth we have now is lasting prosperity? It's really the issue in this campaign. The best way to make sure work stays here in America, the best way to make sure people can find work is to make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our businessowners. That means legal reform so frivolous lawsuits don't make it hard to hire.

We open up our markets to goods from other countries. It's happened in previous administrations. Both Republican and Democrat Presidents have done so, because it's in your interests. The more products you have to choose from, the more likely it is you're going to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the marketplace works. So in return, rather than closing our markets and isolating ourselves from the world, I've said to other countries like China, "You treat America the way America treats you." The best trade policy is to work to open up markets around the world because we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere if the rules are fair.

In order to keep jobs here, make sure the doors of our businesses stay open, we need an energy plan. I submitted a plan to the United States Congress. Congress needs to get it to my desk. It's a plan that encourages conservation. We spend billions on research to make sure that we can find alternative sources of energy. I strongly believe we ought to be using ethanol and biodiesel in the energy mix, which we are. I know we can use technology to see to it that our coals burn more cleanly. We need to be using technology to explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. But to keep jobs here in America, this country must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We've also got to be wise about how we spend your money in Washington. In order to make sure this economy grows, we've got to be wise. We've got to set priorities and stick to those priorities, and we've got to keep your taxes low. If you want this economy to grow, it's important to keep your taxes low, and it's an issue in this campaign. My opponent has, so far, proposed $2.2 trillion of new Federal spending. That's with a "T." That's a lot, even for somebody from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*] And so they said, "How are you going to pay for it?" They asked him, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "I'll just tax the rich." We've heard that, haven't we, before. "Just tax the rich."

Today I'm going to talk to a small-business owner that is evidently a part of that equation. There's a tax gap in his plan. He says, well—he's going to propose $2.2 trillion, by—but by raising the two top brackets, you only raise a little over $600 billion. That's the tax gap. Guess what happens when there's a tax gap in Washington? Guess who gets to fill the tax gap?

Audience member. We do!

The President. Yes. As well, when you hear him say "tax the rich," just remember that the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason, to slip the bill and pass it to you. The good news is, we're not going to let him tax you. I'm going to win in November, with your help. [*Applause*]

Thank you all. Hold on. We've got to work here. Thank you all. Behave yourselves back there. [*Laughter*] They got the best view in the house. Not now. [*Laughter*]

A couple other things I want to talk about. I want to remind you I understand we're living in a changing world. And it's changed—just think about the workplace. It used to be where a person had one job, one career, worked for one company, one pension plan, one health care plan, and that person was a male—generally a male. Today, the workplace has changed a lot. People are changing jobs and careers quite frequently. Women are working inside the house and outside the house. And yet, when you think about it, the

fundamental systems of our Government, like the Tax Code or the health care plans or the pension plans, were designed for yesterday, not tomorrow. I'm running to change those systems so that people have the opportunity to be able to realize the great promise of America.

Let me talk about health care right quick, and we're going to talk about an interesting example of what I'm talking about. The health care system today, we've got a choice, it seems like to me, and the choice is whether or not the Government is going to run the health care or you're going to run the health care. I believe it's as simple and as stark as that. I've analyzed my opponent's plans, and when you think about it, everything he's going to do, it's going to cause the Government to be more intrusive in the health care system. To me, that's the wrong approach.

About 50 percent—so here's some practical ideas for you to talk to your neighbors about. First of all, there ought to be a safety net. There's a safety net when it comes to Medicare. I went to Washington to solve problems. I saw a problem in Medicare. Medicare would pay nearly $100,000 for heart surgery but not a dime for the prescription drugs which would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That didn't make any sense. It certainly didn't make any sense for our seniors. It didn't make any sense for the taxpayers. We brought Republicans and Democrats together. We modernized Medicare, and our seniors will be getting a prescription drug benefit in the year 2006.

I believe in community health centers, places where the low-income Americans can get primary and preventative care in places other than your emergency rooms. And I believe every poor county in America ought to have a community health center. I believe in a children's health insurance program, but we've got to make sure all those who are eligible are signed up to do so.

But I also understand this reality: 50 percent of the working uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. And in order to enable them to be able to better afford health care, I think small business ought to be able to pool risk so they can buy insurance at the same discount big businesses get to do. My opponent opposes that. I think it—I don't think it makes sense. I don't think it's practical, commonsense policy to not enable small businesses to be able to afford health insurance for their employees.

Another problem we have in America, and it's America-wide, is the fact that there's too many lawsuits which are running good docs out of business and running up the costs of your health care. You can't be pro-doctor and pro-patient, pro-hospital and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent has made his choice, and he put a trial lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

I believe in health savings accounts. We're going to talk about health savings accounts in a minute. A better way for me to describe it is to let somebody who owns one describe what they mean. But really, what they are is a chance for somebody to own their own health care account. And I believe good Government policy will encourage—needs to encourage small businesses to set up health savings accounts for their employees, accounts that you call your own. In a changing world, when people change jobs, it makes sense to have somebody be able to own their own health care account that they can take from job to job and that they can pass on to other generations. See, if you own something in a changing world, you have more stability in your life.

Let me talk about the retirement plans in America. It's really important, in my judgment, to think about ownership in the Social Security system, in order to make sure our younger workers have got a system that is viable. Now, let me make—let me say this to you. In 2000, when I campaigned, I clearly remember some of these television ads saying to our seniors, "If George W. gets in, you're not going to get your check." Well, you got your check. It's not going to happen. It didn't happen in 2000. It's not going to happen in 2005. Seniors will get their checks. Baby boomers, we'll get our checks.

But we need to be worried about our young kids, our children and grandchildren. There's a big bulge of us baby boomers getting ready to retire, and there's not enough

people putting money in. That's the issue. And to make sure Social Security is viable for our younger workers, the money in the Social Security trust has got to be earning a higher rate of return. That's why I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own tax money and set it aside in a personal savings account to help fulfill the promise of Social Security, an account they call their own and an account the Government cannot take away.

A couple other things I want to say to you about how to cope in a changing world. The labor laws were designed for yesterday. We need to change them so that people working outside the home are able to have flex-time or comp-time. They're able to be able to store up time so they can better juggle their needs of being a mom and a worker at the same time. The labor laws ought to be family-friendly. The labor laws ought to recognize times have changed and give people flexibility so they can manage both their home and their career.

Right quick about education. First of all, I went to Washington to challenge this system that sometimes, and too many times, just shuffled kids through, grade after grade, year after year without teaching the basics. It is not right to allow a child to go through the school system without having the tools necessary to be able to compete and work in the world of the 21st century. And so I said to Washington, "Let's do things differently. We'll increase Federal spending, particularly for the poor and disadvantaged, but in return, we'll start asking some basic questions, 'Have you taught the child how to read, write, and add and subtract?' "

And so, now, in return for increased Federal money, States must design accountability systems which are able to determine whether or not we're meeting the high standards we've set. You cannot solve a problem until you diagnose it. And so the idea is to determine early in a child's career whether or not he or she can read and correct the reading problem today, before it's too late. We're closing a minority achievement gap in America. The system's working, and we're not going to go back to the old days of no accountability and no excellence in the classrooms, some of the classrooms of America.

But there's more to do, more to do when it comes to education. You know, many of the new jobs of the 21st century require a college degree, but only one in four of our students gets there. That's why I believe we've got to have at-risk programs for high school students so they don't slip behind. We've got to emphasize math and science so that skills—kids have got the skills necessary for the jobs of the 21st century. Over time, I believe there ought to be accountability in the high school systems so we can say we've raised the standards. We need to increase Pell grants for low- and middle-income families. But all this means that more and more of our kids will be able to start their career with a college diploma, will be able to compete in the 21st century.

There's also a skills gap in America. Think about this. In many communities, some communities, the job base is changing from the way it was, of yesterday, and yet, many workers don't have the skills necessary to fill those jobs. We've got a comprehensive program to make sure the worker training programs fulfill the needs of the 21st century. I am a big believer in the community college system, where many of our workers have got the capacity and ability to be able to get the skills necessary to fill the jobs in their own neighborhoods, in their own communities.

And so what I'm telling you is, is I understand this world of ours is changing. And we've got plans to say, in a changing world, the systems of Government will change with it, not to tell people how to live their lives, but to say, "Here's your opportunity." Government can't make somebody be ambitious, but what Government can do is say, "Here's a chance." We'll give you the skills and opportunity to be able to realize the great dreams of this country. That's a hopeful America.

So I'm telling the American people, give me a chance to be President for 4 more years, to build a more hopeful America, an America based upon ownership. Do you realize, under my administration, the homeownership rate is at an alltime high?

And we're about to talk to a homeowner. But before we do so, I want to talk to—Teresa Slaubaugh is with us. Thanks for coming, Teresa. Glad you're here. You're married?

Teresa Slaubaugh. Yes, I am.

The President. Husband's name, please?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. My husband is Paul Slaubaugh.

The President. Good. He is—[*laughter*]—just getting warmed up. [*Laughter*] How many kids you got?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. I have two beautiful children.

The President. Two beautiful children. Are they here?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. Yes.

The President. Let me see if I can pick them out here. No. [*Laughter*] I've asked Teresa to join us just so people understand what the tax relief meant. Now, when I talk about tax relief, first of all, we cut the taxes on everybody who pays taxes. See, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. And secondly, we raised the child credit. Two beautiful children meant that the child credit went up for Teresa and her husband, Paul. It is Paul?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. Yes.

The President. Whew. [*Laughter*] Whooo. [*Laughter*]

This family of four, because of the reduction in rates, the creation of a new rate, the 10-percent bracket, raising the child credit—and oh, by the way, just one other thing before I let Teresa speak—she's probably wondering if she's ever going to get a word in edgewise. [*Laughter*] The code penalizes marriage. It doesn't make any sense to penalize marriage. We ought to have a Tax Code that encourages marriage.

And so, how much relief—how much tax relief did you all get in '03? Do you know? I know. You saved $1,700. That's not a lot in Washington terms, I understand that. Did that mean anything to you and Paul?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. It meant quite a bit to us.

The President. Okay, like how?

Mrs. Slaubaugh. My husband, Paul, works as a high school teacher, and he serves our country as a Navy Reservist.

The President. Great.

Mrs. Slaubaugh. I'm a home-school mom. I'm a stay-at-home mom, and we have benefited from your administration. This has allowed us to purchase curriculum for our son, school supplies for our son. We have been able to supply piano lessons, physical education classes where we have to go outside the home environment to supplement his education. And we've been able to take field trips to various places.

The President. Good. Listen, I think it's important—let me just—this will help me make my point. After Government meets its obligations, after we set priorities and fund them, I think it makes sense to let Teresa and her husband, Paul, keep as much money as possible. She can spend her money better than the Government can spend her money. That's the philosophy. That's our philosophy in this campaign.

And think about what this means. Think about what the tax relief means. I'm so pleased you're here, because it gives me a great example. Think about what it means. It means that as a result of tax relief, the Slaubaugh family has got more choices. It provides more freedom, and they've chosen to educate their child at home. First of all, that's a—it's got to be really hard to be the mom and the teacher, although moms should be teachers, but this is, mom, teacher, and teacher. [*Laughter*]

And yet, the money is freeing them up to do what they want to do. When you hear me talk about Government policy to create more freedom, that's what I'm talking about. They have the freedom to be able to make a choice that they want to choose, and I want to thank the Congress for making sure that the child credit, the 10-percent bracket, and the marriage penalty relief that we passed was made permanent for 5 more years. I appreciate your work. [*Applause*]

Wait a minute. Hold on. We've got a lot more work to do yet.

So one of the things I love is to hear a story about somebody who said, "I've started my own business." I think one of the—I know one of the strengths of this country of ours is the small-business sector of our economy, and today we've got Grant Milliron with us. [*Applause*] Pretty well known, evidently. Pretty soon you'll be running for mayor.

Grant Milliron. You never know.

The President. That's right. So tell the people at what age you started your business.

Mr. Milliron. I was 18 years old, and I was 9 days away from my 19th birthday. [*Laughter*]

The President. You talk about the entrepreneurial spirit, I mean—I can't tell you how many people I've talked to that said, "Well, I started my business at the kitchen table," or "in my garage." I don't know where you started yours?

Mr. Milliron. Very similar. We started with one acre of property and 12 automobiles.

The President. Really? So what do you do? Give people a sense of what your business does.

[*Grant E. Milliron, president, Milliron Iron & Metal, Inc., made brief remarks.*]

The President. There you go. [*Applause*] Hold on. Hold on. He's doing great. A couple of points. He said something interesting; I want to remind you. He said, "Your policies have meant a lot to us recently." And he talked about capital-intensive business—that means machines, got to buy equipment. And one of the things he's referring to is the fact that we provided incentives for small businesses to make purchases and investments, and there's a reason why. I'll get to it in a minute.

So with this incentive, did you buy anything? What did you buy?

Mr. Milliron. We certainly have. We began a program in late 2003 of reentering the solid waste business. I was in that business too for about 15 years. The first thing we did is buy three brand new trucks. Those trucks are very expensive. We spent almost a half-a-million dollars for three trucks.

The President. Somebody had to make the trucks. See, he said—what the tax policy did was it increased demand; that good tax policy says to Grant, "Here's something to help you in the decisionmaking process," which is to make a capital investment. When he decides to make the capital investment, somebody has to make it for him. That's how the economy works. His decision, based upon tax relief, caused somebody else to be able to work and, at the same time, meant his own workers were more productive. That's why good tax policy is—that's how good tax policy happens.

Go ahead. How many workers have you got?

Mr. Milliron. In one company, the iron and metal company, we had 23 people going into the first of this year. We have added seven people. And once our shredder operation is up and running, we know we'll be hiring six or eight more people.

The President. Think about that. That's what's happening in this economy. Grant's got optimism. He sees a brighter future. He's making some capital investments to make his business more competitive, and he's hiring people. He's added seven people. He says he's going to add seven more. It's happening all over America. The small-business sector of this country is leading this recovery. Seventy percent of new jobs are created by small-business owners just like Grant. Isn't that right?

[*Mr. Milliron made further remarks.*]

The President. See, the small-business sector of this economy is leading the recovery. But I want to tell you something interesting and why my opponent's policies are wrong, in my judgment. Grant's company is a Subchapter S. That means he pays tax at the individual income-tax level. About 90 percent of the small businesses pay individual income tax. They don't pay corporate tax. They pay individual tax. That's because they're a Subchapter S corporation or a sole proprietorship. So when you hear my opponent saying, "Oh, we're just going to tax the rich," remember this. Thousands of small-business companies are the so-called rich, in his vernacular. It makes no economic sense to tax this man as this economy is recovering. He just said he's thinking about hiring seven more people. It is less likely that Grant will hire people if he knows his taxes are going up.

Good economic policy rewards investment, rewards risktaking, and honors the fact that 70 percent of new jobs in this country are created by small-business owners just like Grant. John Kerry's economic policies will hurt this economy. You ready? Good job, thank you.

Joanna Williams. How are you?

Joanna Williams. Good.

The President. You are married to Taylor?

Mrs. Williams. Exactly. Very good.

The President. Where is old Taylor?

Mrs. Williams. Oh, he's right back there.

The President. Oh, yes. Hey, Taylor.

Mrs. Williams. You just made his day.

The President. I made his day. Well, I'm trying to get him on TV. [*Laughter*] Give him a, "Hi, Mom," Taylor. [*Laughter*]

I've asked Joanna here and Taylor, because, guess what? They bought their first home this year, isn't that right?

Mrs. Williams. Yes, we did.

The President. I told you homeownership rates are at an alltime high. And so, what was it like?

Mrs. Williams. To buy our home?

The President. Yes.

[*Mrs. Williams made brief remarks.*]

The President. Yes, one reason why people are able to afford homes today is because of—mortgage rates are low. Interest rates are low. This is not the effect of—this is caused by the Federal Reserve Board. I can't claim credit for that. But I can claim credit for this, a policy—a tax policy which left more money in the hands of those that earned it.

I presume that tax relief helped you afford the downpayment?

Mrs. Williams. Yes, it did. And it also helped with Noah's nursery, and we did home renovations around the house too.

The President. Yes, see? Did you have to buy something to do the home renovation?

Mrs. Williams. The home? [*Laughter*]

The President. No, I know. To do the renovation in the home. You had to buy the home, that's for sure. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Williams. No hard questions. [*Laughter*]

The President. Did you go to your local store and—[*laughter*].

Mrs. Williams. Yes. Yes. [*Laughter*]

The President. You did? That's called stimulating demand. The tax relief helped them buy the home; it helped them renovate their home. And when they renovated the home, they had to buy something to renovate it with. That's how it works. That's how the economy works. That's why you want to unleash the individual decisionmaking. See, the economy works on the decisions made by consumers, not by Government people. That's how it works.

And so this good family's decisionmaking was affected by good tax policy. And she owns her own home. We've got plans that encourage others to own their own home. We've got a downpayment plan to help those who can't afford downpayments. We've got counseling programs to help people understand the fine print. You know, a lot of first-time homebuyers—I don't know if that affected you or not—but they take a look at that contract; you know, "I'm not so sure I want to sign." You need a magnifying glass to read the print. And so we've got counselors to help people, first-time homebuyers, to understand the contracts they're signing.

I love it when, in this country, more and more people are opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

Good job. Thanks for coming. Give Noah a hug.

Mrs. Williams. I will.

The President. Kevin is with us. He is—what do you do, Kevin?

Kevin McElligott. I'm an insurance agent.

The President. Good. So you know something about that which you're able to talk about.

Mr. McElligott. Well, property and casualty, but I do work with health care.

The President. Yes. Anyway, he's the owner of a health savings account. Explain to people what that means.

Mr. McElligott. It's an insurance policy. It's a high deductible, around $4,000. We recently just got a couple quotes, conventional versus HSA. Conventional is approximately 50 percent higher. My employer—thank you—takes that money in savings and gives it back to my family in a bank account that we can use for our deductible.

The President. Yes, okay, let me—let me help. [*Laughter*] He owns one. I don't yet. So what he's saying is, is that they purchased a high deductible insurance policy. In his case—I mean, you can get all kinds of deductibles—but in his case, they've chosen a 4,000—is that right——

Mr. McElligott. Correct.

The President. ——dollar deductible, meaning the insurance pays the cost of health care above $4,000. And when you have a high

deductible policy, it costs you a lot less than a regular insurance policy does. In other words, you——

Mr. McElligott. About 50 percent.

The President. Fifty percent. So what does it cost you a month for your high deductible, roughly?

Mr. McElligott. Four hundred and ninety dollars a month.

The President. Yes. So the other one would have been——

Mr. McElligott. Seven hundred and forty.

The President. Something like that. So, in other words, you start paying this to buy this high deductible. And so you say to yourself what about—what happens between zero and 4,000, in his case? And what they've done, and what anybody in America can now do because of the new law, is set up a savings account that you call your own. Your company helps you with the savings?

Mr. McElligott. They take the money that they save from the conventional, from the HSA, and puts that right in your account.

The President. So they put it in an account. So here he's got—think about this now—a family has got $4,000 of cash, earning interest tax-free—it's put in the account tax-free; it comes out tax-free—that they call their own. If they have expenses above $4,000, the insurance policy kicks in. The company contributes the money into the account. Think about, now, what this means. It means he controls the decisionmaking process, not some, you know, insurance executive or insurance worker somewhere. But Kevin and his family makes the decisions.

If there—spends less than $4,000 in the year, the money rolls over to the next year tax-free. It's his money at this point in time. He owns the account. If he changed jobs, the account goes with him. This is a new way for health insurance that does a lot of interesting things. It makes sure Kevin is the decisionmaker. Is that right?

Mr. McElligott. Yes, we have the freedom to choose which doctor, which hospital, which pharmacy we use.

The President. It's very important. Secondly, it provides an interesting incentive, doesn't it, for he and his family to make healthy choices, like walking every day or running every day or swimming every—exercising. It's proven that if you take time out to exercise, you'll have less disease. And as less disease happens, he's got more money in his account. This is an account that makes sure the decisionmaking is between Kevin and the doctors, not between bureaucrats in Washington, DC. What else can you say about it?

Mr. McElligott. Well, I have a wife and three kids. Just to let you know, we use our health care. I have a 3-year-old, Jack, 8-year-old, Laura, and a 10-year-old, Chris, so we do use the doctor. And we've been on this for 3 years, and I don't have one nickel out-of-pocket for medical care in 3 years.

The President. Yes, I want people to look at these.

Mr. McElligott. My wife, Michelle.

The President. It's a different way of doing things, as opposed to the Government telling him what to do or an insurance company saying, "Oh, we'll just cover it." The decisionmaking process is essential to making sure health care is available and is affordable. And this is a way to make sure people are directly involved with health care decisions. I urge everybody, small-business owners out there to look at these plans. It's a way to make sure health care is affordable for your workers. And we're going to make sure that low-income Americans have access to this, providing refundable tax credits that they can use in a health savings account. It's much better if somebody owns their own health account, than be reliant upon the Government for health care. It's much better for the system, and it's much better for the patient. Good job.

A couple of other things. In a changing world, things shouldn't change. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of this society. I also stand for putting Federal judges on the bench who know the difference between their personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law. Okay.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all. Let me talk about one other subject. I want to talk about how to make sure this country is safer. I want to share some of the lessons I learned on

September the 11th. First of all, that we face a determined enemy that has no conscience. These are—these people are—I call them ideologues of hate. They've hijacked a religion in order to justify their brutal vision of the world, and they are determined, and they are tough. The best way to do our duty to protect this country is to fight them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home, is to stay on the offense, never relent, use every asset at our disposal.

Second lesson of September the 11th is that this is a different kind of war. I wish I wasn't talking about war. It's a war that came on our shores. We didn't ask for it. Nobody wanted it, but it's the calling of our time, to protect this country. It's a different kind of war than we're used to. We face these ideologues who will hide in the cities or caves, and therefore, a doctrine—I laid out a doctrine that said, "You can't harbor these people. If you do, you're just as guilty." In order to protect ourselves, we have said to people around the world, "You will be held to account."

Now, when the President has said something, in order to sure this world stays peaceful, he better mean what he says. That's why, in the course of politics, you can't keep changing your position. You can't react to the political situation and say, "Well, now I believe this," or, "I believe that." There has to be a steadiness when it comes to securing this country. And so when I said, "If you harbor terrorists," I was speaking directly to the Taliban who had been harboring Al Qaida—as a matter of fact, thousands trained in Afghanistan—I meant what I said. They didn't believe me, and they're no longer in power, and the world is better off for it.

I want you to think about what's happening in Afghanistan. Three years ago or a little over 3 years ago, many young girls didn't get to go to school because the Taliban had such a dim vision of the world. Women were taken into the public square and whipped, or sports stadiums and killed if they didn't adhere to the strict doctrine of hatefulness. That was the reality and the truth. Plus, they were dangerous, dangerous because Al Qaida, the parasite, was slowly but surely taking over the host.

Today, in Afghanistan, 10 million citizens, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in a Presidential election that will take place in 10 days. As a matter of fact, I think it's a week from today. If I'm not mistaken, the election is a week from today. I could be corrected. But think about that. People that once lived in darkness are now living in light. Freedom is coming to Afghanistan, and it's important for our future to understand the ramifications of a free Afghanistan. First of all, it serves as a beacon for others to see. Secondly, we now have an ally in the war on terror, not an enemy.

And in Iraq, it's been tough work there, just like the tough decision I had to make, which is the third lesson of September the 11th. When we see a threat, we must deal with it before it materializes. If we see a—this is an important lesson to remember—prior to September the 11th, it used to be we'd see a threat and say, "Well, we may deal with it or may not deal with it, but it certainly can't come home to hurt us." That changed on that day. Our history changed. It's essential that the President and the people of this country never forget that threats must be dealt with before they fully materialize.

I saw a threat in Saddam Hussein. I'll tell you why I saw a threat. First, he was a sworn enemy of the United States of America. We had been to war with Saddam Hussein. He was shooting missiles at our pilots who were enforcing the world's sanctions. He had terrorist connections, Abu Nidal, Abu Abbas. Zarqawi was in and out of Baghdad. He ordered the killing of an American citizen from Baghdad, Foley. This is before the—before we went in. Saddam Hussein had used weapons of mass destruction. I understood—I understand today that the connection between weapons of mass destruction and the terrorist network is the biggest threat we face.

So I saw a threat. And I went to the Congress. And they looked at the same intelligence I looked at and concluded Saddam was a threat, and they authorized the use of force. My opponent looked at the same intelligence and voted "yes" when it came time to authorize the use of force. I guess it matters what the definition of "yes" is in his mind. [*Laughter*]

Before the Commander in Chief commits troops into harm's way, he must try everything else, and I did. I understood the consequences of putting our kids in harm's way. That's why I went to the United Nations, and I said, "Well, here's a threat." They looked at the same intelligence and, as they had 16 different times, passed another resolution. And the resolution said, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." A President must mean what he says; international bodies must mean what they say, too, in order to make this world a peaceful place.

Saddam Hussein just didn't pay attention to it. He wasn't interested in resolutions. Why should he be? The first 16 didn't mean anything to him. My opponent the other night said, "Well, we should have passed another resolution." What, the 18th resolution is going to all the sudden make sense to Saddam Hussein? No, he's just waiting for the world to turn a blind eye.

We didn't find the stockpiles we found—that we thought would be there. We thought they'd be there. Everybody thought they'd be. But he had that capability of making those weapons. And when the world turned a blind eye, you can bet he would have.

So the U.N. obviously wasn't interested in—I mean, Saddam wasn't interested in listening to the U.N. Diplomacy wasn't working. The other night, my opponent said, "Well, we should have let the inspectors work." The inspectors were being deceived. The facts are, as David Kay pointed out, the reality on the ground was that the inspectors were being deceived. How can the inspectors work if they're being deceived? So I have a choice at this time. Diplomacy has failed. Saddam Hussein is basically thumbing his nose at the world again, and the choice is this: Do I take the word of a madman, do I hope for the best with Saddam Hussein, do I forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action necessary to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend our country every time. [*Applause*]

Thank you all.

In the debate Thursday night, my opponent continued his pattern of confusing contradictions about Iraq. After voting for the war and after saying my decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power was right, he says, now, "It was all a mistake." He's changing. Then he was asked if our troops were dying for a mistake. He said, "No." See, you can't have it both ways. You can't say it was a mistake and then it was not a mistake. You can't be getting—you can't be for getting rid of Saddam Hussein when things look good and against it when things look bad. You can't claim that terrorists are pouring across the border into Iraq, yet at the same time, try to claim that Iraq is a grand diversion from the war against terror. A President cannot keep changing his mind. A President must be consistent. A President must speak clearly, and a President must mean what he says. [*Applause*]

Thank you all.

A couple of other things. A couple of other things.

Audience member. We love you, George!

The President. In the debate, my opponent said something really revealing when he laid out the Kerry doctrine. He said that America has to pass a "global test" before we can use American troops to defend ourselves.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember that part of the debate, what he said. See, Senator Kerry's approach to foreign policy would give foreign governments veto power over national security decisions. I have a different view. When our country is in danger, it's not the President's job to take an international poll. It's the President's job to defend this country. I work hard with our friends and allies. I just talked to my friend Tony Blair on the bus coming into Mansfield. We'll continue working with our friends and allies for the sake of freedom and peace, but our national security decisions will be made in the Oval Office, not in foreign capitals.

A couple of other points I want to make for you. The—we've got to support our military when they're in harm's way. It's really important. We owe it to the troops in uniform. We owe it to their loved ones too. That's why I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding in September of '03, and the response was great. Members of both political parties understood that we needed to support our troops in harm's way and voted

overwhelmingly for my request. Four United States Senators voted for the authorization of force and against funding, four of a hundred, two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate. [*Laughter*]

Think about that, four Members said, "Yes, we'll authorize force, but we're not going to give you what you need." That's politics, isn't it? So they asked him, they said, "Well, why?" And he said, "Well, I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] Amazing statement. [*Laughter*] The other night he said it was a mistake to say it. No, the mistake was not voting "yes" to fund our troops. That was the mistake.

Somebody said, "Well, you know, this war of yours is creating more enemy." The enemy was plotting before we went into Iraq and Afghanistan. The enemy was being trained in Afghanistan. These ideologues of hate do not need an excuse for their killing. They're trying to shake our will, is what they're trying to do. They want us to withdraw.

We will stay on the offense against them two ways. One, we use every asset at our disposal. Our troops are doing a great job in Iraq. They are—and they're helping us implement our strategy. Our strategy was to transfer sovereignty, which we did early, to a Government run by a strong leader in Prime Minister Allawi. Our strategy is to train Iraqis so they can fight these folks who are trying to stop the advance of freedom, and we're making progress. We've trained 100,000. We'll have 125,000 trained by the end of this year, and these soldiers are doing good work. Look on your TV screens, what's taking place in Samarra. The Iraqi soldiers are working hard, and you shouldn't be surprised. They want to live in freedom. They understand a free society will mean a hopeful society for their children.

There's a reason why Zarqawi and others are fighting. They can't stand the thought of freedom. They understand how powerful a free society will be in contrast to their dark view of the world. The best way to defeat terrorism in the long term is to defeat hopelessness and poverty by spreading liberty and freedom, and that's why this battle is taking place in Iraq. And that's why it's important signal to our troops. The President should never send mixed signals. We should never send confusing signals to friends and foe alike.

We'll continue our rebuilding efforts to help these people get up and going. We've got $7 million obligated to be spent over the next months. There will be elections in January. It's one thing to be realistic, but I think you can be realistic and optimistic. I believe we're going to succeed. As a matter of fact, I'm confident we'll succeed so long as we don't lose our will. And when we succeed, we'll have done our duty to protect America. Not only will we have removed a tyrant that had been a source of great instability and danger to our country, we will have helped a country grow in democracy. And that's important, because I believe in the power of liberty to transform societies.

I tell people this so people can understand better what I'm talking about. I've got a great relationship with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan, an interesting guy. I saw him in New York a while ago at the U.N., and I said, "I'm telling people in our country about our relationship. Do you mind?" He said, "No, not at all. It's okay." He likes Elvis. [*Laughter*] I didn't tell him that part. I don't think he would mind. Do you mind, friend? Anyway, it's interesting to think about this conversation—these conversations we have with him, though, in this context. Fifty years ago, we were fighting the Japanese. Think about that. They were a sworn enemy of the United States of America. Fifty years isn't all that long, unless, of course, you're 58 years old, which seems like—[*laughter*]—seems like an eternity. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, so we were at war with a sworn enemy. My dad fought there. I'm sure, confident, other relatives of yours fought there as well. And yet, after that war was over, Harry S. Truman and others said, "Why don't we help Japan become a democracy so it becomes a peaceful part of the world?" There were skeptics in America then, of course. You can imagine, many of the families were saying, "Wait a minute." Many of the families of the deceased were saying, "Wait a minute. Why would we want to help an enemy that killed my loved one become a democracy? Why would we want to help them at all?" But we had a belief that still stands today,

that liberty can transform societies, liberty can cause an enemy to become a friend.

And so, today, I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi talking about the peace we all want, talking about how to make this world a more peaceful place. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with the duly elected leader of Iraq talking about the peace in the greater Middle East. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe people throughout the world long to live in free societies. I believe the women of the Middle East want to be free. I believe if given a chance, people will choose the form of government which enables people to better realize their dream, democracy. I believe all these things not because freedom is America's gift to the world—it's not—freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

And so I've come here to Mansfield, Ohio. I've come here to let you know I've got a reason for asking for the vote again. I clearly see where this country needs to go. I strongly believe that when I get 4 more years, this country will be a safer place, a stronger place, and a better place for everybody who lives here.

Thanks for coming. On to victory. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at the Renaissance Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Robert T. Bennett, chairman, Ohio Republican Party; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; David Kay, former CIA Special Advisor for Strategy Regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

October 2, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all. The sun is shining on Ohio. I'm thrilled to be here. I am the first sitting President ever to come to this fine city. The rest of them missed a great place. I'm so proud you all came out today.

I'm so honored to be standing up here with Chuck Canterbury to receive the endorsement of the Fraternal Order of the Police. It means a lot to get the endorsement from those who serve our country on a daily basis to make it safe. I'm proud of that endorsement. I want to thank Jim Pasco and Nick DiMarco as well as all the Fraternal Order of Police folks standing behind me.

I want to thank you all for coming. I'm here to ask for your vote. We're getting closer and closer to election day, and I'm here to ask for your help as well. Go out and register your friends and your neighbors. Tell them they have a duty in America to vote. In a free society, we have an obligation to go to the polls. Make sure you don't overlook those discerning Democrats, either—[*laughter*]—like Zell Miller. Or my friend the mayor of Youngstown, Ohio, George McKelvey. I'm proud you're here, Mr. Mayor. I'm proud to call you friend, and I'm proud to call you supporter. Thanks for coming.

Then after you get them registered to vote, get them headed to the polls. And remind them that if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Listen, I have one regret, and that is that Laura isn't here with me.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. Yes, I know. I hear it all the time, "Why didn't you send Laura, and you stay at home?" [*Laughter*] True story. She said, "Fine, I'll marry you," when I asked her, but she said, "I don't ever want to have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "You got a deal." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to my word. The country got to see Laura speaking in New York City at that convention. They got to see a strong, decent, fine woman. Laura is a great First Lady. I'm really proud of her. I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years.

And I'm proud of my Vice President, Dick Cheney. He's warming up. [*Laughter*] He'll be right around the corner pretty soon. He's not going to have the waviest hair on the set. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him for his hair. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his judgment and his sound experience. Dick Cheney is getting the job done for the American people.

I'm proud of your United States Senator Mike DeWine. Thanks for coming, Mike. I'm honored you're here. Speaking about Senators, you've got another good one in George Voinovich. You need to put him back in. He's doing Ohio good work. He's a good, solid man, a good, decent fellow. I want to thank Congressman Ralph Regula for being with us today too. Thank you, Chairman. I'm glad you're here.

Lieutenant Governor Jennette Bradley is with us. Today is her birthday. Yes. What a great way to celebrate your birthday. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the mayor, Don Robart, who is here. Mr. Mayor, my only advice, my only advice—I know you didn't ask for any—but my only advice is, fill the potholes. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the high school band that's here. Appreciate you coming. But most of all, thank you all. I want to thank those who work at the grassroots level for putting up the signs and making the phone calls. I appreciate you. I want to thank you for what you have done and what you're going to do coming down the stretch. With your help, there is no doubt in my mind we will carry Ohio again and win a great victory in November.

And I'm looking forward to this campaign. I love coming to your State. I've been spending some quality time here. [*Laughter*] I like to come because I want to tell people where I stand, what I believe, and where I'm going to lead this Nation.

I believe every child can learn and every school can teach. I went to Washington to challenge what I've called the soft bigotry of low expectations. That's a system that, in some cases, passes children through, grade after grade, year after year, without learning the basics. It's not right. It's not right for our country. We've raised the standards. We're now measuring early, so we can solve problems before they're too late. I believe in local control of schools. We're closing an achievement gap in America, and we're not going to go back to the old days.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor our seniors with good health care. I went to Washington to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I saw a problem in Medicare. Medicine had changed, but Medicare hadn't. You know, we pay $100,000 or so for a heart surgery for a Medicare patient but not one dime for the prescription drugs to prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That doesn't make any sense for our seniors. It doesn't make any sense for the taxpayers. I brought Republicans and Democrats together. I signed a bill that modernizes Medicare. Seniors will get prescription drugs in 2006, and we're not going to go back to the old days.

I believe in the energy and innovative spirit of our workers, our small-business owners, our farmers, our ranchers, and that's why we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation.

When you're out gathering up the vote, remind your friends and neighbors about what this economy has been through. The stock market started to decline before Dick Cheney and I got to Washington. Then we had a recession. Then we had some citizens forget what it means to be a responsible American. They didn't tell the truth. We passed tough laws. It is abundantly clear now in America, we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of our country. And then the enemy hit us. And that hurt us. That hurt our economy. You know it hurt the economy.

But this economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. We've been growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. It's growing because of the spirit of the people. It's growing because of those tax cuts. We've added 1.7 million new jobs last year. We've added 107,000 manufacturing jobs since January. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s.

There's still work to do in parts of Ohio. I understand that. That's why I support opportunity zones, places like Summit County,

to give companies relief and incentives so that they can expand to places where the manufacturing sector has been hurt. No, there are things we're going to do, but this economy is strong, and it's growing stronger. We're not going to go back to the old days of tax and spend.

I believe the most solemn duty of the President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

I'm running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer world and a more hopeful America. I am running with a compassionate conservative philosophy that Government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe this Nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership, and that is why with your help, we're going to win a great victory in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. The world in which we live and work is changing. I understand that. The generation of our dads and granddads, a man generally had one job and one career, and the company he worked for paid for the pension plan and health care. This world we're living in is different. The workforce is changing. Women are working inside the house and now outside the house. And many workers change careers and jobs over their lifetime.

And yet, the most fundamental of our systems, the Tax Code, health coverage, pension plans, and worker training, were created for yesterday, not tomorrow. I am running to change those systems so all citizens are equipped, prepared, and thus truly free to make your own choices so you can pursue your own dreams.

Now, I understand that a hopeful society is one that has got a growing economy. If we want to keep jobs here in America and expand the job base, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations on our businessowners. That means we got to do something about these frivolous lawsuits that plague our small businesses.

If we want to keep jobs here, if we want to—Congress needs to pass my energy plan. It is a plan that encourages conservation. It is a plan that encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It is a plan that says we'll explore technologies to make sure we consume energy in different ways. It is a plan that encourages clean coal technology. It is a plan that allows us to explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. It is a plan that recognizes, to keep jobs here in America, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs in this country, we've got to reject economic isolationism. See, we've opened up our markets—just not me. Other Presidents, as well, from both parties, have opened up our markets because it's good for you, the consumer. See, if you've got more products to choose from, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the market works. And so what I'm saying to places like China, "You treat us the way we treat you." Opening up markets is good for our workers. It's good for our farmers. See, we can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime, so long as the rules are fair.

To make sure we keep jobs here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money in Washington, and we've got to keep your taxes low. Taxes are an issue in this campaign. I'll tell you why. The fellow I'm running against has so far proposed $2.2 trillion in new spending. Yes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. No, I know. That's a lot, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. So they asked him how he's going to pay for it, and he said, "Well, we're just going to tax the rich." We've heard that before, haven't we? Let me tell you a couple things wrong with this "tax the rich."

First of all, you can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for $2.2 trillion. You raise about $680 billion. Therefore, there is a tax gap. Guess who always gets to fill the tax gap? Yes, you do. "Tax the rich," yes, we've heard it. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason, because they want to stick you with the bill. We're not going to let John Kerry tax you; we're going to win in November.

Now that we're on taxes, let me say something about the Tax Code. It's a complicated mess. It's a million pages long. It takes 6 billion hours a year to fill out the tax forms in this country. In a new term, I'm going to bring Republicans and Democrats together to simplify this Tax Code so it's more fair for you.

In a changing world, the skills that are required for the jobs of the 21st century change. We have a skills gap in America in some communities. Some jobs are gone; new jobs arrive. In order to help our workers, I'm a big believer in the community college system, to make the systems available so people can gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. As well in a changing world, most new jobs filled by people—are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, yet, one in four of our students gets there. That's why I believe in early intervention programs in high school to help our at-risk students. That's why I know we've got to place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. See, by raising the performance in our high schools and by expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, more Americans will start their career with a college diploma.

In this time of change, we've got to do something about the health care system. There's a big difference in this campaign on health care. You listen carefully to what my opponent's laying out, and it says one thing: The Federal Government's going to run it.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I want you to run it. I want you to be the decisionmaker. So here's some practical ways to help. First of all, we'll take care of the poor and the needy by expanding community health centers all around the country. We have a duty and an obligation to do so. It makes sense that those folks get good health care in these centers and not in the emergency rooms of our hospitals. Secondly, we'll continue to expand the children's health care program for low-income Americans.

In order to make sure health care is available and affordable, we're going to help our small-business owners. One-half of the uninsured, currently uninsured, work for small businesses. There's a reason why, small businesses can't afford health care. They ought to be allowed to pool together their risk so they can buy insurance at the same discount big businesses can. That makes sense. That's a commonsense way to make sure the control of health care is in your hands. My opponent opposes that.

I'll tell you another thing we need to do to make sure health care is available and affordable. We've got to do something about these junk lawsuits that are running up the cost of medicine and running good doctors out of practice. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, pro-hospital, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. See, I think you have to make a choice. My opponent made his choice, and he put a trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs and patients. I'm for medical liability reform—now. In all we do, we'll make sure the medical decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

In a changing society, it helps bring stability in people's life if they own something. The homeownership rate under my administration is the highest it's ever been in America. Over the next 4 years, we'll continue to expand the homeownership policies to every corner of America. I love the idea of somebody opening up the door where they live and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

As well, we've got to think different about our retirement systems. You might remember the 2000 campaign, when people said, "Well, if George W. gets in, they're going to take away your Social Security check." You still got your check, didn't you? So here's my message to our seniors: Don't worry about what they tell you in the campaign; the Social Security obligation will be fulfilled. And for us baby boomers, there's enough money in the system to take care of us.

But because there's a lot of baby boomers getting ready to retire, we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. I believe younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their own tax money and set up a personal savings account that they can call

their own, that the Government cannot take away.

In this world of change, there are some things that do not change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In changing times, we'll support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We believe in a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since the terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we've fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're reforming and strengthening our intelligence services. We're strengthening our All-Volunteer Army, which will remain an all-volunteer army. We are staying on the offensive. We are striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

We will continue to spread freedom and liberty in the broader Middle East and around the world, and we will prevail. Our strategy is—see, you think about the world the way it was a while back. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups; Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering danger; and Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we acted, a free Afghanistan is fighting terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida have been brought to justice. We've led. Many have joined, and America and the world are safer.

This progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. And the toughest came on Iraq. Saddam Hussein was a threat. We knew his record of aggression, support for terrorist organizations. Saddam Hussein used weapons of mass destruction. He fired missiles at our pilots which were enforcing the world's sanctions. He slaughtered his own people. Saddam Hussein was a threat. And after September the 11th, we must always remember, we must take threats seriously, before the fully materialize.

That is the reality of the world in which we live. I recognized that reality, and I went to the Congress. Congress debated the issue. They voted overwhelmingly to authorize the use of force. They had looked at the same intelligence I did, remembered the same history I did, and voted overwhelmingly for force. My opponent looked at the same intelligence I did, and when the vote came to authorize force, he voted "yes." I guess now it depends on what the meaning of "yes" is in his mind.

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. Before the Commander in Chief commits our troops into harm's way, he must try every other alternative. And so I went to the United Nations hoping that diplomacy would work. The United Nations debated the issue and voted 15 to nothing, the U.N. Security Council, to say to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." I believe when an international body speaks, it must mean what it says.

As he had for 16 other resolutions, Saddam Hussein ignored the United Nations. The other night, my opponent suggested we probably should have passed the 18th resolution. [*Laughter*] What good would a resolution do after he ignored the first 17? As he had for a decade, he wasn't about to listen to the demands of the free world. As a matter of fact, when they sent inspectors in—it is now a fact that Saddam Hussein was systematically deceiving the inspectors. Part of my opponent's plan, as articulated in Miami, said, "Well, we should have let the inspectors work." They weren't working. He was deceiving them. He was hoping the world would turn away. So I had a choice to make at this

point in time: Do I take the word of a madman, forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

We didn't find the stockpiles we all thought were there. But remember, Saddam Hussein had the capability of making weapons of mass destruction. He could have passed that capability onto a terrorist enemy, and that was a risk we could not afford to take after September the 11th. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision. America and the world are better off with Saddam in a prison cell.

Because we acted to defend our country, 50 million people now live in freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I want you to remind your friends and neighbors about the Afghan story. You realize, almost 3½ years ago, the Taliban, these ideologues of hate, would not yet—let many young girls go to school. Imagine a society in which young girls weren't allowed to go to school. When their mothers didn't toe the line on their ideology, they'd take them in the public square and whip them. Sometimes, they shot them in the sports stadium. It was a dismal, dark society.

Today, 10 million Afghan citizens have registered to vote, 41 percent of whom are women, and they're having a Presidential election later on this month. Think about that. Freedom is powerful. Freedom has converted a society that was dark and gloomy to one of hope and light.

In Iraq, there's a brave Prime Minister named Prime Minister Allawi. They're going to have elections in January. It's hard work there. I know it's hard work. But you can be realistic and optimistic at the same time. We got a good plan. We're training the Iraqis so they can do the hard work. A hundred-thousand of them are trained. They're taking action today against some of those terrorist thugs. Slowly but surely, their forces are getting up, and some point in time, they'll be ready to defend themselves.

We're helping to rebuild that country. Other nations are involved. They're having conferences here and conferences there. I'll tell you one thing, a summit isn't how you solve the problem. I've been to a lot of summits. I've never seen one that brought a terrorist to justice.

No, we've got a plan, and it's working. Mr. Zarqawi's got one—he's got one weapon, and that is to shake our will, because we've got good conscience, because we care about human life and human dignity. Every life is precious. That's his one weapon. But when America gives its word, America will keep its word, for the Iraqi and Afghan citizens. We'll help these people move toward elections. We'll get them on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

We've got a great military. I'm proud of our military. And I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. I also want to thank the military families who are here today. We appreciate your sacrifice, and I made a commitment to our families and to those who wear the uniform that you'll have all the resources you need to complete your missions.

That's why I went to the Congress, September of 2003 and asked them for $87 billion of important funding, funding to support our troops in harm's way. We got great support there. As a matter of fact, the support was overwhelming for the $87 billion. All but 12 United States Senators voted for the funding, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate. I want you to remind your friends and neighbors this: There was only four Members of the Senate that voted to authorize the use of force and didn't vote to fund our troops, two of whom would be my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they actually asked him, they said, "Why did you do that?" He said, in one of the famous quotes of the 2004 campaign—[*laughter*]—"I actually did vote for the $87 billion, right before I voted against it."

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. They kept pressing him. He said he was proud of the vote. Finally, he said, "It was a complicated matter," and, yet, incredibly enough, he came up with a new reason. Last week, he described his vote

against funding the troops as a protest vote. He said it on national TV.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When American troops are in harm's way and defending our country, they deserve better than to have a candidate for President use them as a protest vote. Oh, I forgot. I forgot. There's yet another explanation since then, and it happened at the debate. He said he made a mistake in how he talked about that vote. The mistake wasn't what Senator Kerry said. The mistake is what Senator Kerry did.

In the debate, my opponent also said something revealing when he laid out the Kerry doctrine. [*Laughter*] He said this, that America has to pass a "global test"——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——before we can use troops to defend ourselves. Senator Kerry's approach to foreign policy would give foreign governments veto power over national security decisions.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I have a different view. When our country is in danger, the President's job is not to take an international poll. The President's job is to defend America.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. The heart of my conviction is that liberty can help change societies for the better. You know, I spend time with the Prime Minister of Japan. He's a good friend. I was in New York with him at the U.N. I said, "By the way, I'm talking about you on the campaign trail. Do you mind?" And he said, "No, not at all." I didn't tell him I was going to tell you that he likes Elvis. [*Laughter*]

Nevertheless, here's why I like to bring him up. Wasn't all that long ago that our country was at war with Japan. My dad fought them. Your dads and granddads fought them as well. They were the sworn enemy. And after World War II, Harry Truman and other Americans believed that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally and worked with Japan to promote democracy. Now, a lot of people then, I'm confident, were skeptical about that being able to happen. You understand why. We had just fought them. A lot of lives had been lost. But because Harry Truman stuck to those values, today, I sit down at the table with the head of a former enemy, talking about the peace we all want, talking about how to work together to keep the peace.

Liberty is powerful. It is powerful. I am confident that someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader of Iraq talking about how to keep the peace in the greater Middle East, and our country will be better off for it. Our children and grandchildren will be able to grow up in a more peaceful world.

I believe that the women in the Middle East want to live in freedom. I believe that everybody wants their child to grow up in a free and peaceful society. I believe if given the chance, the people in that part of the world will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man. And I'll tell you why I believe these things: Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. By reforming our systems of Government, we'll help more Americans realize their dreams. We'll work to spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of our country. We'll pass the enduring values of our country on to a young generation. We'll continue to work for peace and freedom around the world.

You know, for all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. It's a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that make this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget it. There were workers in hardhats there yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to console some people coming out of that rubble. A guy grabbed me by the arm. He looked me straight in the eye, and he said, "You don't let me down." Waking up every morning since then, trying to figure out how best to protect

America. I will defend the security of the people of this country, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, as I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I made this pledge. I said if I was honored to be able to hold the office of the Presidency, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of that office. With your help and with your hard work, I will do so again for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless you all. Thanks for being here. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. at the Cuyahoga Falls Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth C. Canterbury, national president, James Pasco, executive director, and Nicholas DiMarco, Ohio State president, Fraternal Order of Police; Mayor Don L. Robart of Cuyahoga Falls, OH; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on Signing the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 in Des Moines, Iowa

October 4, 2004

Thank you all. Thanks for coming today. Thank you all. Please be seated. Mr. Chairman—[*laughter*]—you probably think I've come here to sign an important piece of legislation. Actually, I'm here for a different reason. The South Lawn of the White House has a lot of grass—[*laughter*]—I'm looking for somebody to mow it. [*Laughter*] And so Mr. Chairman, you shall now be known as "Grass-mower." [*Laughter*] And by the way, when you're through using that car—[*laughter*]—I've always liked an old Olds. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you being here, Mr. Chairman; proud to call you friend.

Thanks for being here as well. It's a beautiful day here in Iowa. Iowa is such a beautiful place. Today, with my signature, Federal law will extend vital tax relief for millions of American families and add momentum to our growing economy. Today here in Des Moines, Iowa, the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 becomes the law of the land, and I appreciate you being here to watch it.

And I really do appreciate working with Mr. Chairman. He's had a remarkable tenure as chairman of the Finance Committee in the Senate. We have accomplished a lot together. I appreciate other Members of the congressional delegation who are with us today, the chairman of the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives, Jim Nussle—thank you for coming, Jim. Jim Leach, Congressman Jim Leach is with us. I appreciate my friend Jim Leach being here, as well as Congressman Tom Latham. I'm honored they are here.

Not here is head of the Ways and Means Committee in the House of Representatives, Chairman Bill Thomas of California. I appreciate his hard work on this bill, and I appreciate him working with Chuck Grassley to get the bill done. I also want to thank minority leader in the House of Representatives on the—in the Ways and Means Committee, Charlie Rangel, Democrat from New York, for working on this bill, as well as Senator Max Baucus, Democrat from Montana, for working with Chuck Grassley on the bill as well. I want to thank all the Members of Congress who worked hard to get this bill done.

I appreciate members of the ex-Governors club who've joined us today. I happen to be a member of that club as well. I'm a fellow member. [*Laughter*] Terry Branstad and Bob Ray have served your State so very well, and I appreciate their friendship. And I'm glad Billie Ray is with Bob. I'll tell Mother and Dad hello for both of you. Appreciate you coming.

I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I particularly want to thank the president and CEO of the YMCA, Vernon Delpesce, as well as Dave Hoak, who's the chairman of the Y, for letting us use this facility for this bill signing ceremony.

I want to thank the Patterson family who is with us here. They're beneficiaries of the tax relief. I spent some time with them backstage. I'll be speaking about another family here in a minute.

The law I sign this morning comes at just the right time for America. Some of the tax relief provisions we passed over the last 3 years were set to expire at the end of 2004. Unless we acted, a family of four earning

$40,000 would have seen their Federal income taxes rise by more than $900. That would have been a burden for hard-working families across America. And it would have been a setback for our economy.

Today we're acting to keep vital tax relief in place. The bipartisan bill I sign today extends the $1,000 child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief, and the expanded 10-percent tax bracket. It also protects millions of families from having to pay the alternative minimum tax in 2005. That tax was designed over three decades ago to make sure wealthy Americans pay their fair share of taxes, but now it affects middle-income families. This bill will also increase the child credit refunds for almost 7 million low-income families in the 2004 tax year.

Overall, 94 million Americans will have a lower tax bill next year, including 70 million women and 38 million families with children. The money they keep will make it easier to save for their retirement or their children's education, invest in a home or a small business or pay off credit card debts.

One of those families is the Hintz family from Clive, Iowa. Thank you all for coming. It's a special day for Mike and Sharla, not because they're with the President or with Chairman Grassley, but because it's their 13th wedding anniversary. Theirs is a typical story. See, last year they received a child tax credit check for $1,600 for their four children. And under all the tax relief we've passed, they saved about $2,800 last year. With this extra money they bought a wood-burning stove to reduce their home heating costs. They made a decision for their family. They also made home repairs and improvements. They took the family on a vacation to Minnesota. Next year when you get your check, you may want to come to Texas. [*Laughter*]

Without the tax bill I'm signing today, the Hintzes would have paid $1,200 more in Federal taxes next year. Think about that. Here's a family of four, working hard to raise their kids; the money would have been going out of their pocket. I believe they can spend that $1,200 better than the Federal Government can.

This legislation will have good effects throughout the economy. The tax relief we passed in 2001 has helped our economy overcome a lot of challenges, a stock market decline, a recession, terrorist attacks, and war. By extending key portions of that tax relief, we will leave close to $50 billion next year in the hands of the people who earned it, and that money will help keep the economy moving forward and result in even more new jobs for American workers.

This act of Congress is essential, but it's only a start. Over the next few years, if we fail to take further action, the tax relief will expire and Federal income taxes will go up for every American who pays them. For the sake of our families and small businesses and farmers, investors, and seniors, we need to make all the tax relief permanent.

We need to make sure the death tax doesn't come back to life. We need to keep the tax relief we enacted for investors and small businesses. We need to reform the Tax Code to make it simpler, easier to understand, and progrowth. To keep the economy growing, we need to reduce the burden of regulation on small businesses. To keep our economy growing, we need to end the junk lawsuits that keep entrepreneurs from creating new jobs. To keep the economy growing, we need an energy plan to make sure America is less dependent on foreign sources of energy, by using alternative uses of energy like ethanol and biodiesel. We need to open up foreign markets for our products and to continue to ensure that other countries play by the rules. We need spending discipline in our Nation's Capital.

I look forward to working with the Congress to achieve all these goals. When we keep taxes low and trust our American families with their own money, they spend it far more wisely than we can. And when they do, they make the American economy stronger.

I appreciate the Members of Congress who are here today. I wish they'd come up and join me as, in the great city of Des Moines, Iowa, I sign into law the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:24 p.m. at the South Suburban YMCA. In his remarks, he referred to former Iowa Governor Terry E. Branstad; former Iowa Governor Robert D. Ray

and his wife, Billie; and Vernon Delpesce, executive director, and David Hoak, chief volunteer officer, YMCA of Greater Des Moines, IA. H.R. 1308, approved October 4, was assigned Public Law No. 108–311. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks in a Discussion in Clive, Iowa

October 4, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thanks for being here. Please be seated. We've got to get started. I've got some things I want to tell you.

First thing I'm going to tell you is I'm here asking for the vote in Clive, Iowa. I'm enjoying this campaign. It gives me a chance to get out among the people and tell people what I believe and where I stand and where I'm going to lead this country for the next 4 years. I'm here also to ask for your help. There's no doubt in my mind, with your help, we'll carry Iowa and win a great victory in November. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

They tell me I'm the first sitting President ever to visit Clive. I don't know what took all the other ones so long to get here—[*laughter*]—but thanks for being here. I wish Laura were here. Imagine this conversation: "Will you marry me?" "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to the promise, because when people see Laura, they see a strong, compassionate, fine, fine First Lady. I think in the course of the campaign you have to tell people why they should vote for you; that's what I'm here to do. But perhaps the most important reason of all is so that Laura will be the First Lady for 4 more years.

Today I'm going to talk to some of your fellow citizens about why our policies make sense, and I'd like to answer some questions if you have some. Before I do that, I do want to introduce some people traveling with me. First, I do want to thank the next Congressman from the 3d Congressional District, Stan Thompson. He's a good Member, I hope you put him in office. I'm here to tell you he ought to be the next United States Congressman.

I appreciate Members of the U.S. Congress from the Iowa delegation for coming. From the east side of the State, Jim Nussle and Jim Leach, two really fine friends. And I appreciate you all being here. Thanks for coming. Leach is a longtime Member, one of the most decent men you'll ever meet. Chairman Nussle is the chairman of the Budget Committee, making sure that the Iowa taxpayers' monies is well-spent in Washington. I also want to thank Tom Latham from northwest Iowa for being here today. Congressman, thanks for coming. Proud you're here.

And I just signed an important piece of legislation making a lot of the tax relief—extending a lot of the tax relief for 5 years. And I was able to stand on stage with the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Chuck Grassley. He's a good man. He went back to Washington. I told him if he'd suffer through one of my speeches, I'd give him a ride back. [*Laughter*] But he's frugal. [*Laughter*] I also told the people, I said, "I'm really getting to be good friends with Chuck Grassley, for a reason. The south lawn of the White House"—[*laughter*]—"is mighty big, and we're looking for a good mower." [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the State auditor, David Vaudt, for being here. I appreciate you coming, David. I want to thank the Senate president, Lamberti, as well as my friend Stew Iverson, the majority leader. Thank you all for coming. Good to see you all. Big Stew, looking good. Stew has got that same hair style as the Vice President. [*Laughter*]

By the way, I didn't pick the Vice President because of his hair. [*Laughter*] I picked him because he's a man of great judgment, wonderful experience, a guy who can get the job done for the American people.

I want to thank David Roederer, the chairman of the Bush-Cheney campaign. I want to thank all the grassroots activists, the people putting up the signs and making the phone calls and registering the voters. I can't thank you enough for what you're going to do, which is to work as we're coming down the stretch. It really means a lot. It really means a lot.

I'm running because I want this country to be a safer country and a more hopeful

country. I understand that we're living in changing times, and the institutions of Government must change with those times. See, my philosophy of Government is that Government ought to help people realize the great opportunities of our country, not tell you how to live your lives. There's a fundamental difference in this campaign about Government philosophy.

When I say "changing institutions," I'm talking about the labor laws need to change with the times. Think about this fact: 30 years ago, most women stayed at home; today, most women are working inside the house and outside the house. Yet the labor laws reflect yesterday, not tomorrow. I believe the labor laws ought to change and have flextime for workers, so that they can better manage their families and their workloads.

The retirement systems were designed for yesterday. I believe they ought to be designed for tomorrow. Let me tell you about my plans for Social Security. First of all, you might remember the campaign in 2000. Latham reminded me of it. When they were running, they said, "If George W. gets elected, he's going to take away your Social Security check." Remember those ads? Well, you remind your friends and neighbors, you got your check. That's the same old stale political rhetoric. You'll hear it again this time too. And baby-boomers, we're in good shape when it comes to Social Security.

But it's the youngsters who have to pay for the baby-boomers' retirement we better worry about. That's why I believe we ought to allow young workers to take some of their own tax money and set up a personal savings account that will earn better interest than the Social Security trust today, so they can be able to more likely get the benefits of the Social Security System, a personal savings account they call their own, a personal savings account they can pass on to their kids or grandkids, and a personal savings account that the Government will not take away.

We've got to make sure that our worker training programs work. They were designed for yesterday. They need to be designed for tomorrow. Listen, in this changing world of ours, it requires—oftentimes requires new skills. These jobs are new jobs, the jobs of the 21st century. Just look at the health care industry. It's a booming part of our economy, yet, oftentimes, people don't have the skills necessary to fill those jobs. So one of the things Government must do is make sure the Workforce Investment program works, make sure there's access to our community college system, expand Pell grants, and expand Government help for workers.

This is the kind of thing that is necessary to make sure people have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. And do you realize that most new jobs in America now require at least 2 years of college, yet one in four of our students gets there? And that's why it's essential we keep working on No Child Left Behind, to make sure every child has got the skills necessary to read and write and add and subtract.

I'm looking forward to discussing No Child Left Behind with the American people. You might remember, there were times when they would just move kids through school, grade after grade, year after year, without teaching the basics. I don't think that's right. That's what I call—that's why I went to—when I say I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations, that's what I'm talking about. Expectations were so low that they just moved kids through. We've changed that. We're raising the bar. We believe in local control of schools, but we're now saying, "In return for increased Federal spending, measure. Show us whether or not a child can read. Let's correct problems early, before it is too late."

We've got to stop this business about shuffling kids through school, and we are. There's an achievement gap in America that's beginning to close, but there's more to be done. I believe we ought to have intermediate help programs for at-risk students in high school. We ought to emphasize math and science. We ought to expand Pell grants for low- and middle-income families. We want more of the kids graduating from college being able to fill the jobs of the 21st century. That's how you make sure this country is a hopeful place.

In changing times, it helps to own something. It brings stability to your life. I'm proud of the fact that homeownership rates are at an alltime high in America under my administration. And so we got plans to make

sure homeownership is spread to every corner of America.

Speaking about ownership, it helps when somebody owns their own health care account in changing times. There's a big difference of opinion about health care in this campaign. I believe the decisions ought to be made by you and your doctor. My opponent believes that the Federal Government ought to be making your decisions.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yes. That's what I call—he's got a system that's creeping toward "Hillary Care." [*Applause*]

I got a commonsense, practical way of making sure health care is available and affordable. I'm a big believer in community health centers. That's where the poor and the indigent can get primary and preventative care. I believe every poor county in America ought to have a community health center to make sure health care is available for people. I believe we ought to make sure that the children's health care program for low-income families is fully subscribed.

To make sure health care is affordable, I want to help the small businesses afford health care. Do you realize 50 percent of the uninsured today work for small businesses? Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. I believe they ought to be allowed to pool risk with other small businesses so they can afford insurance at the same discount big businesses get.

I believe in health savings accounts, individualized health savings accounts that provide for catastrophic care and tax-free savings for routine medical costs. It's a plan that you own. When you change jobs or if you change jobs, you take your health care with your—with wherever you go. These are innovative, commonsense ways to make sure that health care is available and affordable.

I'll tell you another thing we need to do about health care costs. We've got to do something about these frivolous lawsuits that are running up the costs on small businesses. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. [*Laughter*] I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a trial lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I'm for medical liability reform—now.

Let me talk about Medicare right quick. I went to Washington to fix problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents. I thought Medicare needed to be fixed. It's a very important program. Yet, as medicine modernized, Medicare was not modernizing with it. And I'll give you an example. Medicare would pay $100,000 or so for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that would prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That didn't make any sense for our seniors. It did not make any sense for the taxpayers. So I worked with Democrats and Republicans to modernize Medicare, and starting in 2006, our seniors will get a prescription drug benefit in Medicare. And today, our seniors can sign up for a drug discount card; 4.4 million seniors have done so in order to derive substantial savings at their local pharmacies.

We're making a difference when it comes to health care. But all we do to make sure health care is available and affordable, we'll make sure the decisionmaking is between patient and doctor, not between bureaucrats in the Nation's Capital.

It's important to make sure America is a hopeful place, by growing our economy. I want you to tell your friends and neighbors and remind them what we have been through. The stock market was in significant decline prior to my arrival in Washington, DC. That was an indicator that something was taking place in the economy, and sure enough, we had a recession. And the recession hurt us, but so did the corporate scandals. You know, our economy is based upon trust. And when some of our citizens didn't tell the truth, it shook our confidence and hurt our economy. We passed tough laws, and that made it abundantly clear that we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

And then the attacks hurt us. And then we got attacked. On September the 11th, 2001, our Nation was brutally attacked, and those attacks cost us a million jobs during the 3 months after September the 11th. Think about what we've been through as an economy, recession, attack, corporate scandal. And yet, the economy is strong, and it's getting strong. It's growing at rates as fast as nearly in any 20 years. Your great State

of Iowa has got a farm economy that's really strong. Unemployment rate in this State is 4.5 percent. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

And people say, "How did it happen? How did we get out of this recession so quickly?" One reason is, we've got great workers. Secondly, the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America. More and more people are owning their own small business. Thirdly, we had well-timed tax cuts. Those tax cuts left more money in the hands who earned it. People had more money to spend.

The tax cuts also helped to stimulate the job creators. Not only did we help to stimulate demand, but we helped to stimulate the job creators. See, 70 percent of new jobs in America are created by small-business owners. Ninety percent of small businesses pay tax at the individual income-tax rate, because they're either Subchapter S corporation or a sole proprietorship; those are legal terms which basically mean they pay an individual income tax. And so when you cut individual income taxes on everybody who pays taxes, you're really helping our small businesses. And when you help the small businesses, you help the job creators. And when you help the job creators, somebody is more likely to find work. We've added 1.7 million jobs since August of 2003. The tax relief plan is making a difference.

And there's a difference in taxes in this campaign. There's a big difference. I've lowered taxes, and my opponent wants to raise taxes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You may have noticed, he changes positions quite frequently—[*laughter*]—but not on taxes. [*Laughter*] During his 20 years in the Senate, he's voted to raise your taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, all of a sudden, he's saying, well, he's for a middle class tax relief. Except he voted against raising the child credit. He voted against reducing the marriage penalty. He voted against creating a 10-percent bracket, which helps low-income Americans. Plus, he's proposed $2.2 trillion in new Federal spending. And so how—they asked him, "How are you going to pay for it?" And he said, "Oh, I'll just tax the rich." We've heard that before, haven't we?

Well, I want you to remember one thing. We're about to talk to a businessowner that will be affected by the so-called tax-the-rich policy. If most small businesses pay individual income taxes and you raise the top two brackets, you're taxing job creators. And that's bad economic policy, to be taxing the people who are creating the new jobs. If you want more jobs, you keep people's taxes low, not run them up.

If you propose 2.2 trillion, and you only raise a little over 600 billion by raising the top two brackets, there's a gap. [*Laughter*] Two-point-two trillion in spending, a little over 600 billion in revenues raised, means you've got to fill the hole. You've got to find additional taxes if you're going to fulfill your promises. And guess who ends up paying? Every time somebody out of Washington makes the promises and falls short of being able to raise the revenues, they're going to tax the middle class every singe time, aren't they?

Let me tell you one other problem he has with that. He says, "Oh, I'm just going to tax the rich." Well, the rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason; that's to stick you with the tab. But we're not going to let him tax you. We're going to carry Iowa and the country in November.

A couple other points I want to make and then I want to talk to some of our citizens. It's one thing to have overcome obstacles and get the economy growing, the fundamental question is, what do you intend to do to keep it growing? Now that we're on the track to recovery, how do you make sure the recovery is lasting? Here are some ideas for you.

In order to make sure jobs stay here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. That means less regulations. My opponent's plans increase regulations. I believe in providing regulatory relief. If you want to keep jobs here in America, there needs to be fewer frivolous lawsuits that make it hard for employers to expand the job base.

If we want to keep jobs here in America, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. You can't have a growing economy unless we have a reasonable energy plan, an energy plan that

encourages conservation, that provides money for research and development, so that we can develop alternative sources of energy, an energy plan that relies upon ethanol and biodiesel to help us become less dependent on foreign sources of energy, an energy plan that uses technology so we can burn the coal of our country, an energy plan which encourages the exploration for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. To keep jobs here, we must become less dependant on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here, we've got to open up markets. One reason Iowa's farmers are doing so well—I fulfilled a promise. I said, "If you let me be President, I'll work to make sure you can sell your crops anywhere in the world," and it's making a difference. We're selling a lot of soybeans to China. And that's the task of the President.

See, you'll hear some talk about, you know, reviewing trade agreements. That's really kind of hinting about economic isolationism. That makes no sense for Iowa workers and farmers and small-business owners. It makes no sense to wall ourselves off from the world. What we ought to be doing is opening up markets. We've opened up our markets for foreign goods, and it's good for you. If you've got more products to choose from, you're likely to get what you want at a better price and higher quality. That's how the market works. So what the President ought to be doing is what I'm doing, which is saying, "China, you treat us the way we treat you," saying to the world, "Open up your markets the way we've opened up our markets." And I'm saying that with confidence because I know we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere so long as the rules are fair.

One thing I forgot to mention about the Medicare Plan that Chuck and I worked on, along with the Members of Congress, is that we understood, under Medicare Iowa's hospitals weren't being treated fairly. I remember that clearly when I campaigned here in 2000. When I was knocking on doors, I can remember a lot of the citizens here were saying, "Now, if you get up there, do something about the rural hospitals. Make sure Iowa's hospitals are treated fairly." I delivered. So did Chuck Grassley. So did these Members of Congress. Iowa's hospitals are being treated fairly under the new Medicare law.

In order to make sure this economy grows, we've got to keep people's taxes low. We need to make sure the tax relief we pass is permanent. Today I signed a piece of legislation that extended the child credit, marriage penalty, and the 10-percent bracket for 5 more years.

And we're about to talk to a family. Bobbi and Ricardo Ramirez are with us. Thanks for coming. I've asked them to join us because I want you to hear their story. You know a lot of times, politicians talk or economists talk about tax relief this, tax relief that—but I always think it's good to put a face on it. Let people know exactly what the tax relief has meant.

What do you do? What do you all do?

Bobbi Ramirez. My husband works for Knapp Properties. He's a residential maintenance worker, and I'm a stay-at-home mother.

The President. Very good. And how many kids we got?

Mrs. Ramirez. We have three girls.

The President. There they are. Hi, girls. Good to see you. Thanks for coming. And so tax relief?

Mrs. Ramirez. Tax relief has been a huge blessing for us.

The President. How much did you save?

Mrs. Ramirez. We saved about $1,700.

The President. Yes. That's probably not a lot when you're working up in Washington. [*Laughter*] It's a lot for this family. It's their money to begin with.

What did you do? What did you do with the money?

Mrs. Ramirez. We were able to use the money mostly for our children, to be able to get them school clothes and school supplies and extracurricular activities that maybe we normally would not have been able to do, like softball and dancing and things like that.

The President. Yes. They were able to use the money so they could do their job as a mom and dad. When you think about it, they were able to fulfill—begin to fill ambitions for their family. That's what tax relief means. It not only helps the economy—just remember they said, "We were able to go out and

buy some school supplies." Well, when somebody shows up to buy school supplies, it means somebody has got to make those school supplies. Somebody makes them; somebody is going to work. But equally importantly, these people with more money were able to begin to realize dreams for their children. Tax relief was important.

You also did something with your home.

Mrs. Ramirez. We did. We refinanced our home, and we were able to—in the amount that we saved for interest, we didn't raise our monthly payment, but we were able to build on and put an addition onto our home.

The President. Right, and refinancing their home—low interest rates, good fiscal policy meant they were able to improve their home. Nothing better than hearing somebody stand up and say, "I'm improving my home. This is my piece of property." That's what the American experience is all about, isn't it? And tax relief helps.

Do you realize that had we not extended the tax relief, this good family would have paid $600 additional in taxes last year—next year? See, that's $600. The fundamental question in this campaign is, who do you want spending the people's money? Now, look, I think we need to set priorities. That's why I work with Chairman Nussle, to set priorities. But I believe that after we fund our priorities, the Ramirez family can spend their money better than the Federal Government can.

I'd like to—Jeff Henning is with us. Jeff, thanks for coming.

Jeff Henning. Good afternoon, Mr. President.

The President. Straight out of Johnstown, Iowa. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Henning. Close, Mr. President.

The President. Good to have you.

Mr. Henning. You too.

The President. You run what?

Mr. Henning. Henning Construction Company.

The President. Henning Construction Company. That's—since your name is Jeff Henning, I presume you own it.

Mr. Henning. Yes, I own the store. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's good. Did you start it?

Mr. Henning. My grandfather started the business in 1924.

The President. Oh, fantastic. Isn't that interesting? And so give me a sense of the business.

Mr. Henning. We are general contractors. As I say, we have four generations. Our business and our customers have come to us as a result of the tax bonus act and said, "We need to make investment. We want to take advantage of this." Therefore, our business has grown by 60 percent this year.

The President. See, what he's saying is, is that part of the Tax Code incented small businesses to invest. If they invested, they got tax relief. Investment means spend money. And so one of the things they spent money on, I take it, was something you had to build.

Mr. Henning. That's correct. We build buildings and equipment for our customers, and we had to make substantial investments, ourselves, in order to equip those troops to do that work.

The President. Yes. So what did you buy?

Mr. Henning. We bought forklifts, equipment, trucks, vehicles——

The President. Somebody had to make them. See, here's how the economy works. Good tax policy says to Jeff or his customers, invest. And when he invests, somebody has to make the product he buys. And so it has a ripple effect. And we'd rather that ripple effect be done in the private sector. That's what we're beginning to see in this country.

Have you hired anybody?

Mr. Henning. Yes, we have. We've hired 56 people additional this year.

The President. This year? [*Applause*] Yes. All of them live in Johnston?

Mr. Henning. No, Mr. President, they're all over the United States of America.

The President. Really? This guy has got quite a far reach. [*Laughter*] He is a intercontinental businessman. [*Laughter*] Let me ask you this: You were talking to me about your concerns about the death tax, why?

Mr. Henning. Well, Mr. President, we just went through some estate planning. We have two daughters in the business, and in order for us to be able to pass this on, they would have to sell the business if something happened, if we didn't take care of it.

The President. See, this is a problem in America, and we're about to talk to a farmer who can relate to it as well. But it's a problem when you've got a family-owned business and the Tax Code forces you to sell it. I think we need to simplify the Tax Code, and one way to simplify it is to get rid of the death tax forever.

Good job. Oh, wait a minute. I got one other point. Hold on. I got one other thing to tell you about this good man. He's an S corp. That's one of those companies that pays taxes at the individual income-tax rate.

Mr. Henning. That's correct.

The President. Yes, see, I wasn't making it up. [*Laughter*] And so when you hear them say "tax the rich," think about Jeff. That's the so-called rich. He hired 54 people this year. And I'm going to tell you, when they start taking money out of employers' pockets, like him, he's going to be less likely to hire somebody. If we want to keep this job—this recovery growing and people being able to find work, we should not be taxing Jeff Henning's company. We ought to be encouraging his company to expand and grow. [*Applause*] Thank you.

And my opponent doesn't understand that. Either he doesn't understand it, or he doesn't care, because he wants more money for the Federal Government.

Let's talk to Craig Lang. Yarrabee Farms, straight out of Brooklyn, and I'm talking Brooklyn, Iowa. [*Laughter*]

Craig Lang. Yes, that's right.

The President. Thanks for coming.

Mr. Lang. Thank you.

The President. Tell us about your farm.

Mr. Lang. Well, I'm fifth generation farmer. My great-great grandfather walked from Ohio to Brooklyn, Iowa, back in 1860, and we've had that farm in our family ever since. And we not only own it; we also operate it.

The President. That's good, yes. How's the farm economy?

Mr. Lang. It's great. It was wonderful to hear you talk about world trade—in Iowa, 30 percent—everything that the farmer produces in Iowa is sold somewhere outside of our borders. It's just absolutely important that we're competitive as farmers in the world market, and your administration is allowing us to do that.

The President. Actually, our administration is creating the conditions for somebody who knows what they're doing to be able to succeed. We can't make you succeed. That's up to you. All we can do is create the conditions, the opportunity, by opening up markets and have good tax policy. Did the tax policy help you?

Mr. Lang. That's right, the reduction tax policy, the income expensing, all those things have been very important this year. We've had one of the best years—my brother, my father, and myself. In fact, it's been such a great year that we're—right now we're working with an attorney and CPA and insurance agent——

The President. That's a heck of a year if you've got to hire an attorney. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Lang. ——to make sure that at the time of a death, that the estate taxes aren't a burden on our family, so the next generation beside me can have the opportunity to operate that farm too.

The President. Yes, see, that's a problem, isn't it? Here's a good man who is trying to figure out ways to pass his farm on, so he has to hire a lawyer and an accountant to do it. And again, this is where the death tax makes a huge difference. And people have got to understand out there listening that if you own a farm, sometimes you don't have much liquidity. And in order to pay the tax, you actually have to sell the farm in order to be able to pay the tax.

I hope that's an unintended consequence of the fellows who wrote the death tax years ago, but it's a lousy consequence. And that's why we got to get rid of this death tax. We want farms to stay family to family, if that's what the owners choose to do. We want people to make decisions. I appreciate you.

Finally, Hank Evans is here. Hank, thanks for coming. We've got a mike headed your way. You are the owner of?

Hank Evans. A.F. Johnson Millwork Company.

The President. And where are you? Des Moines—right here.

Mr. Evans. We're in West Des Moines.

The President. Very good, thanks for coming. What do you do?

Mr. Evans. We custom build architectural millwork, and we build things like teller lines, reception desks, and nurses stations.

The President. Really?

Mr. Evans. Store fixtures.

The President. Must we doing well—a lot of nurses.

Mr. Evans. It's been a good year, sir.

The President. A couple of points that we want to talk to Hank about is, one, he's concerned about the health care costs of his company. At least you told me you were, backstage.

Mr. Evans. Yes, Mr. President, our health care has gone up about 20 percent on average over the last half dozen years. A number of years ago, through the Association of Business and Industry, we had a group health plan for all the members of that association, 2,000 of them.

When the law changed, we were no longer able to do that, and as a result the level of health care we've been able to offer is not only had the cost has gone up, but the quality has gone down. We would love to see the ability for that association to again offer health care. It would allow us hire and attract and keep better workers and offer them a better plan.

The President. Right. Was this a health care association plan just for Iowa?

Mr. Evans. It was, yes, the Iowa Association of Business and Industry.

The President. Basically what he's saying is—and here is what we're talking about, see—a stand alone purchaser of health, like Hank, means he's not going to be able to afford a policy relative to being able to have others bid with him. In other words, the more people you have to spread risk, the lower the cost of your insurance is going to be. That makes sense, doesn't it? And so if you're a smaller business and stand-alone trying to purchase insurance in the marketplace, it's going to be a lot higher than if you had others to share the risk with you. And here in Iowa, evidently, you had the capacity to do that, but law changed.

Mr. Evans. Yes, it did.

The President. Yes. See, what I believe we need to do is let Hank and his company pool with people not only in Iowa but in other States. The bigger the pool, the less costly the insurance. But Federal law won't let us do that now. And my opponent doesn't want that to happen. I think it makes sense to have it happen, because I want Hank making the health care decisions. I don't want there to be a great Federal pool.

He's done something else very interesting. Remember I was talking about making sure the workforce training programs work, actually mean something. Explain what you've done. This is a fantastic story.

Mr. Evans. Well, trying to find cabinetmakers is about like trying to find hens teeth, Mr. President. They're very scarce.

The President. Really? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Evans. We've had difficulty for years finding good workers. So about 3 years ago, we went to the local community college, DMACC, up in Ankeny, and we set up on an architectural millworker training program. It's a year-long program. We're training 16 kids a year now to be architectural millworkers and cabinetmakers.

The President. Isn't that something? Community colleges are great. I'll tell you something really interesting. Think about the attractiveness of the community college system: Curriculum change if need be. In other words, if there's a demand for workers, the community college can change curriculum or adapt curriculum or come up with curriculum necessary to train those workers for the jobs which actually exist. And all of a sudden, here you have an employer that says, "I'm going to be creative. I'm going to work with the local education institute to help people get the skills necessary to actually work."

In the old days, some of these worker training programs, they'd train people for jobs which didn't exist. Now we got an opportunity to train people for jobs which actually exist. And that's why I'm going to ask Congress to spend $250 million to make sure industry-type programs with community colleges are expanded. People want to work. They don't have the skills sometimes, and we can do—provide skills in a creative way, just like Hank has done, so people can realize their dreams here in this country.

Thanks for coming.

Mr. Evans. Thank you.

The President. I want you to know that in changing times, some things don't change,

the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And we stand for judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law. [*Applause*]

Okay, a couple of other points. I got some other things I got to tell you. I just saw somebody stand up with an "Army Wife for Bush" shirt. I'm going to talk about—[*applause*]—thank you. That's what I want to talk about, a safer America. My most solemn duty is to protect you. My most solemn obligation as the President is to do everything in our power to prevent harm to the American people.

You know, as I was campaigning here in 2000, I never dreamt that we'd be attacked the way we were. Nobody asked for this attack in America. But since they came, we're going to deal with it. I want to share some thoughts with you. Let me share some thoughts with you.

Let me share some thoughts with you about what I have learned and what I hope the country has learned. First of all, we're dealing with an enemy that has no conscience. Today, if you noticed, there was a car bomb near a school. These people are brutal. They—they're the exact opposite of Americans. We value life and human dignity. They don't care about life and human dignity. We believe in freedom. They have an ideology of hate. And they're tough, but not as tough as America. It's really important for people to understand, you cannot negotiate with these people; you cannot hope for the best. We must—we must chase them down all around the world, so we do not have to face them here at home. That's the lesson number one: Be relentless and determined; never yield.

Secondly, that this is a different kind of war that requires a different kind of strategy. And it's really important for you to realize that these people—their ambition is beyond just a single attack. Their ambition is to take over countries from which they can spread their ideology of hate. That's why they were in Afghanistan. They're like a parasite, hopefully being able to overcome a weak host, and they were in the process of doing that.

And so I laid out a doctrine that said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist." Now, when the President says something, I believe the President must speak clearly, and when he says something, he must mean what he says. I meant what I said, and thanks to our military, the Taliban got routed.

Now, let me tell you about the Taliban. Their vision was so dark that many young girls were not allowed to go to school. It's hard for people in America to imagine that, but that's the way it was. And if their mothers or if the women of that country didn't toe the line, they'd be taken out into the public square and whipped or killed. These people were barbarians. And by routing them out, by toppling their government, not only did we deny Al Qaida a safe haven, but we have liberated people.

And I want you to hear this statistic. I think it's one of the most powerful statistics of the 21st century. Because we acted, 10 million citizens in that country, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in the October 9th Presidential election. Amazing, isn't it? It's an amazing statistic. The way I like to describe it is people are emerging from darkness to light because of freedom. And it's in our interest that Afghanistan be free. It's in our interest that we have an ally in the war on terror. It's in our interest that we have a model of freedom in a part of the world where freedom is desperately needed.

The third lesson is, when we see threats, we must deal with them before they fully materialize. When we see a threat—see, in the old days, we'd see a threat, and we'd say, "Well, maybe this threat will—we need to deal with, or maybe we don't." But we never thought it would come to hurt us. Every threat now must be taken seriously. We scan the world, watching very carefully. If our job is to protect you, then we just got to watch every threat seriously.

And we saw, I saw, my administration saw—Congress saw, by the way—a unique threat in Saddam Hussein. You know, at the time, we thought he had stockpiles of weapons. Everybody did. Since then we have

found that he has had the capability of making weapons. And here's the danger. Saddam Hussein was a sworn enemy of America. We had been to war with Saddam Hussein before. Saddam Hussein was a source of great instability in a volatile part of the world. Saddam Hussein had the capability of making weapons. At the time, of course, we knew he had used them, so we knew he had that mindset. Since then we've discovered he had the capability. And we knew that he had terrorist connections. Saddam Hussein—here's the danger. Saddam Hussein could have shared that capability of weapons of mass destruction with the enemy. And that's a risk we could not afford to take. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

We have a difference of opinion in this campaign. My opponent calls Iraq a "great diversion" from the war on terror. I strongly disagree. The reason why Zarqawi is fighting so hard—why this terrorist is fighting so hard, is because he understands the stakes. A free Iraq will be a devastating blow for the ideologues of hate. He's called it a "diversion" from the war on terror. I call it a battle in the war on terror.

You cannot be the Commander in Chief of this country and tell those fine troops in Iraq that they're participating in a "grand diversion" from the war on terror. You can't be the Commander in Chief and lead those troops and at the same time say, "Wrong war, wrong place, wrong time."

No, we have a difference of opinion. My opponent said that—in the debate—I didn't say this; he said it—that we must pass a "global test" before we commit troops into harm's way.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Think about that now. Our most solemn duty is to protect you. Can you imagine taking an international poll of nations to determine whether or not we need to protect you?

I'll tell you what's was really interesting, in 1991, when my dad was President, he saw a threat, and that was that Saddam Hussein was going to overrun Kuwait. And he went to the Congress and the United Nations and put together a vast coalition that I think under any scrutiny would pass the "global test." My opponent voted against authorizing the use of force in 1991. So now he says, you know, Iraq would have been a—Iraq is a mistake, and voted against 1991—that means Saddam would not only have been in his palaces, that means he would have been in Kuwait as well. The policies of my opponent are dangerous for world peace. If they were implemented, they would make this world not more peaceful but more dangerous.

In Iraq we're going to have elections in January. In Iraq we're training people, Iraqis, so they can do the hard work of defending themselves. We're training and equipping army, national guard, police, border patrol. I don't know if you've seen any newspapers recently, but in Samarra, the Iraqi soldiers performed brilliantly. Slowly but surely, they're getting the confidence and the training necessary for them to do the hard work. That's our strategy. They're willing to fight for freedom, and they need the help to do so. In Iraq we're going to spend money to help them rebuild that society. In Iraq we'll continue to work with our friends and allies, and we've got a great coalition. You can't lead a coalition by saying to the leaders of those countries, "Join me for the wrong war." [*Laughter*]

As a matter of fact, my opponent—in the debate they said—he kept saying, "I've got a plan." If you listen carefully to it, the plan was to call a summit. I've been to summits. You don't bring terrorists to justice at summits. I can imagine him walking in to the leaders of the world saying, "We need your help, but Iraq is a mistake. We need your help. Commit your troops into harm's way for the wrong war at the wrong time and the wrong place." He has no plan. A summit won't solve the problem. Strong consistent leadership is what this world needs. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

Two other points, real quick. I'm not trying to filibuster. [*Laughter*] Two points, to the Army wife, I say to you, one, thank you for your husband's sacrifice. And I—[*applause*]—hold on for a minute. You're filibustering. And we owe you and your loved one the full support of the Federal Government. And that's why I went to the Congress to

ask for $87 billion of funding. And it was important funding. It was funding that would give our troops that which they needed for combat in both Afghanistan and Iraq. And the bipartisan support was overwhelming for the funding. Think about this fact: Only four United States Senators voted for the authorization of force and against funding the troops—only four—two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him about the vote, and he issued the famous quote of the campaign, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] And they pressed him. He's given about five different answers on the vote. He said, well, he was proud of the vote. Then he said, "It was a complicated matter." [*Laughter*] And then he said that it was a protest vote. On national TV, he said, "Well, that vote was a protest vote." Think about somebody who wants to be the Commander in Chief saying that he's going to vote against important support for the troops in combat and calling it a protest vote. Finally he said, oh, his vote—the other night on the debate, he said, "Well, the vote was a mistake." No, what was a mistake was—he said, "What I said was a mistake." No. What he said wasn't the mistake. His vote was the mistake.

Finally, let me share with you about my beliefs on liberty. I believe liberty has got the ability to transform societies. I do. And I believe that because I'm watching it happen in Afghanistan. But also I spend time with my friend Prime Minister Koizumi. He's an interesting guy. I saw him at the United Nations recently when I was up in New York, and I said, "I'm telling people all across the country about our relationship. Do you mind?" He said, "No." I didn't tell him I was going to tell you that Elvis is his favorite singer. [*Laughter*] It's true. [*Laughter*]

Think about this story, though—think about what I'm telling you. It wasn't all that long ago that my dad and your dads or granddads were fighting the Japanese. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. And after World War II, after we won, Harry Truman believed that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally. That's what he believed. And I bet there was a lot of skepticism, don't you? There was a lot of heartache, lot of anger at the Japanese. "Why help them, you know. They killed some of our sons. Why do we care?" But Harry Truman cared, because he had a vision that was a long-term vision about world peace. People in America cared, because they have deep faith in the values that makes us a unique nation. As a result of Harry Truman's faith in liberty, I now sit down at the table with the leader of a country that was a sworn enemy, talking about the peace we all want. Think about that. Think about what liberty can do.

People like Zarqawi know the power of liberty, and that's why they're resisting. He's got one weapon. They can't whip our military. He's got one weapon. His weapon is to shake our conscience. His weapon is to conduct such horrific acts against innocent people that America loses its will and our faith in liberty to change the world is shaken. My faith in liberty will not be shaken. I understand what we're doing has got a chance to change the world for the better. Someday, when we achieve our goal in Afghanistan, which is helping this country get up to be a democracy, someday, an American President will be sitting down with a duly elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace, talking about how to keep the peace in a troubled part of the world. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I want to thank you all for giving me the chance to share with you why I'm running. See, I believe somebody running for office can't just sit on their laurels. They've got to talk about what they are going to do. I'm here to tell you America will be a safer place, a stronger place, and a better place when you send me and Dick Cheney back into office for 4 more years.

All right, let me see if we got some time for some questions. I'm ready to take some questions if anybody has got a question. Yes, sir, holding the child right there. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

Freedom of Religion

Q. Mr. President, first, we just want to tell you that we pray for you every night, as our President.

The President. Thank you, sir.

Q. We thank God that we live in a representative republic, that we're able to homeschool our children, and—a fact that we're sharing with Leon Mosley the other night at the Christian Coalition dinner what we're teaching our children about a representative republic, and he said maybe my little 7-year-old should come down here and share it with you. Can you tell the President what Noah Webster said about our republic?

Participant. It would do our system well to learn at an early age that the correct principles of our republic is the Holy Bible, the New Testament, and Christianity.

The President. Thank you. Thank you. Let me say something about religion. Let say something about religion. First of all, that was well done. Here's the strength of America. You can worship or not worship, and be equally patriotic. That's the strength of this country. Think about it. A free society—a truly free society is one in which people can worship the Almighty God or choose not to worship the Almighty God, and you're free to do so. And you're just equally an American, no matter what choice you make.

Let me tell you something else. If you choose to worship the Almighty, you're equally an American if you're a Christian, Jew, or Muslim. That's the strength of America. It's essential that we maintain that strength. Thank you for your prayers. Amazing nation when they pray for the President and his family. It strengthens us and sustains us, and for that, I'm really grateful. I appreciate it a lot.

All right, anybody got a question out here? Yes, ma'am.

Medicare

Q. Why is Medicare—[*inaudible*].

The President. She asked about Medicare going up 17 percent. I'll give you the answer right now. First of all, because there was a formula fixed by the United States Congress in 1996. This wasn't the administration saying, "Raise it." This went up because of a formula that my opponent voted for, for example. Secondly, because the cost for doctors went up. In other words, when they reimbursed doctors more for Medicare, your premium went up. Thirdly, it went up because there are additional benefits that you're going to realize as a result of the law we passed, preventative medicine. And it's the first time ever that Medicare—you as a Medicare patient can get a screening and preventative care. Never has that been done before, and now we've got it in the new law. In '06, you're going to get a drug benefit. But those are the reasons why. Thanks for asking.

Yes, sir.

Timing of Troop Withdrawal From Iraq

Q. [*Inaudible*]—my son was able to serve in Iraq, and by the grace of God has come home safe.

The President. Fantastic. Thank you. What branch of service?

Q. He's in the Army.

The President. Army. Good.

Q. My question is, is when can other parents rest easy, knowing their sons and daughters are on their way home?

The President. You bet. Thanks for asking. As soon as the mission is complete. As quickly as possible, but we've got to get the mission done. I'll tell you, it's—whether it be for the sake of your son who sacrificed or for a son who did not come home, we must complete the mission in their honor. In the honor of your son's sacrifice and service, and in the honor and the sacrifice of those who didn't make it, it's essential we finish the job. It's in our interest that Iraq become a free country.

Think about what a free country will do in the broader Middle East. Think about what the signal will send to the Palestinian people, who must reject corrupt leadership and embrace a peaceful form of government called democracy—true democracy. Think about the example that a free Iraq will set for women in the broader Middle East. I believe everybody desires to be free. I believe that, and it's essential that there be a—an example of freedom in a part of the world that is desperate for freedom. If we want to win this war on terror, we not only need to stay on the offense, we need to help nations become free nations. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Yes, ma'am. You're on.

Community Colleges/No Child Left Behind Act

Q. I was excited about your proposal about funding for community colleges.

The President. Yes.

Q. I, myself, have gone back to school.

The President. Good. Thank you.

Q. My daughter is 12 years old. She's been behind in reading all along, but since I went back to school, myself, last fall, she has increased and is reading above grade level at this point.

The President. Fantastic.

Q. My point is that that also—educated parents educate their children better. And that affects No Child Left Behind. Would this funding affect all of community colleges or merely the industrial aspect of community college?

The President. First of all, there's a lot of money going to help people get worker training. We spend billions for worker training programs. What I'm talking about is a specific program aimed at encouraging the job creators and the community colleges to come together to give people the skills necessary to fill the jobs. I mean, there's trade adjustment assistance. There is help. I don't know if you're receiving Federal help or not, but there is all——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, full scholarships help. [*Laughter*] Sounds like—full scholarship is more than half scholarship. [*Laughter*]

She said something interesting about No Child Left Behind. She said, "My daughter was not reading at grade level." Think about that. How do you know, unless you measure? How can a mom say, stand up in front of the President of the United States and say, "You know, my daughter wasn't reading at grade level, and now she's reading above grade level," unless you measure? If you do not measure, you cannot diagnose problems and solve them. That's what No Child Left Behind has done. It gives you the confidence to say, "My daughter is reading above grade level."

Think about a system in which you have no idea. And what happens in a system like that is—is that somebody gets out of high school, and they can't read. And all of a sudden, that person becomes disillusioned and can't find the work of the 21st century. No Child Left Behind is really a good piece of legislation. We start early in measuring. People say, "Oh, don't test." You've got to test. How can you tell whether or not the curriculum is working? How can a parent decide whether or not her child's school is measuring up to the next neighborhood school? This isn't a way to punish people. This is a way to solve problems. It's essential that we stay strong when it comes to accountability. That's how we make sure children are educated.

Listen, I was the Governor of Texas. I heard them say all the time, "All you're doing is teaching the test." No, we're teaching a child to read so they can pass the test, and we better determine whether or not that child can read. I appreciate you bringing it up. The first teacher—a child's first teacher is a mom or a dad. And you're right, and I appreciate you helping a young child.

Yes, sir.

Possible Reserve Callups/Future of Iraq/Draft

Q. [*Inaudible*]—I am appreciative of your leadership. We have a son that was in Iraq, in the Marine Corps——

The President. You do?

Q. ——he went in——

The President. You don't look old enough. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you.

The President. Certainly, the mom doesn't look old enough. [*Laughter*]

Q. He went in with the invasion, did 7 months there, came back, and he went back again. He was in the Sunni Triangle, and he's back now, safely, at home.

The President. Good.

Q. I served under your father, in Desert Storm, in the Air Force.

The President. Thank you, sir.

Q. Right now I'm currently in the Air Force Reserve. And my question to you is, I know the Reserves have more commitment and more responsibilities, and I'm wondering how will that look in the next 4 years for the Reserves?

The President. Yes, I appreciate that. Let me talk about the military. Thanks for your service. He's wondering whether he's going to get called up. Let's get to the bottom line. [*Laughter*] Yes, that's what I thought. [*Laughter*]

Here's the goal. The goal is to train the Iraqi citizens so they can do the work. And it takes the—it will take away the need for us to rotate troops in. That's the goal. People say, "What's the timetable?" Let me tell you what's wrong with saying a timetable. You might remember my opponent said, "Well, we'll have them out of there in 6 months." I got on him for that, because you can't send a signal for 6 months. Well, 6 months—so the enemy says, "Fine, I'll wait them out for six months and one day." That doesn't do any good.

You know, if I tell the Iraqis, "Well, we're coming out whether we get the job done or not," then they'll quit. They need confidence that we'll help them do the job. These people have gone from a tyrannical situation to a freedom, and that's hard to do. And you need the confidence necessary to start assuming the obligations of a free society. And that's why it's essential we not send any mixed signals to them and that we're wise about, you know, talking about timetables.

My answer to you, as quickly as possible. But the way to relieve the pressure off of our troops and the coalition troops is to train Iraqis as quickly as possible. We've got 100,000 of them trained now. We've got 125,000 of them trained by—at the end of this year. We'll have nearly 200,000 trained by the end of next year, and that's a significant number of troops and folks to help.

You know, my opponent says, "Well, what we're going to do is get other nations to send troops in." They're not going to go in for the "wrong war." I know these people. [*Laughter*] I've talked to them a lot. They're our friends. They're not going to say, "Yes, let us sacrifice for the wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time."

To answer your question, sir, we're going to do our job as quickly as we can and make sure we get the job done.

Now, secondly, I want to answer something. You didn't ask it, but I'm going to ask it myself. [*Laughter*] Are you going to keep the All-Volunteer Army volunteer? And the answer is, absolutely. That is why we increased pay to make the All-Volunteer Army work. That's why we increased housing benefits. That's why we're making sure these troops are skilled.

Secondly, in order to win the war on terror, we need specialized forces. This is specialty work. If you draft, you don't get the specialized force you need. We don't need a draft. We will not have a draft so long as I'm the President of the United States.

Yes, ma'am.

International Criminal Court/Partial-Birth Abortion

Q. I want to thank you, Mr. President, for not joining the International Criminal Court. And thank you for——

The President. Put the mike on that.

Q. Thank you for not joining the International Criminal Court, and thank you for signing into law the partial-birth abortion ban act, which was—[*applause*].

The President. Thank you. Thank you all. Thank you all. Listen, I understand the life debate. And I believe reasonable people who disagree on the issue can come together for commonsense policy. Banning partial-birth abortion was commonsense policy. People on both sides of that issue recognize the brutality of the practice. My opponent wasn't for the ban. He's out of the—really out of the mainstream, it seems like to me, on that issue.

The lady brought up the International Criminal Court. This is a court based in The Hague, where our troops or diplomats, could be brought before a foreign judge, an unaccountable foreign judge, because of decisions made by our country. I think that would be really bad. I think it would be bad for our troops to have to be, you know, facing an unaccountable prosecutor in a foreign land for decisions that the Commander in Chief made.

Listen, if somebody does something wrong in our country, we've got plenty of justice, and we don't need to be signing up for a Federal—international court. My opponent would join the International Criminal Court.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You see, they talk about, you know, popularity. I don't think you should try to be popular and make bad decisions. That may be popular in certain European capitals to join the International Criminal Court, but I assure you it is unpopular with our military and the diplomats. It is bad policy, and my opponent is wrong in supporting the International Criminal Court.

Yes, ma'am. You. [*Laughter*]

President's Leadership

Q. [*Inaudible*] Okay, I'll speak louder. [*Laughter*] Thank you, President Bush, for your integrity. You're a man of honesty, and I trust you with my life and my family's.

The President. Thank you.

Q. [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

The President. That's kind of boiling it down right there, you know? Thank you. I appreciate that.

My job as President is to do a lot of things and make a lot of tough decisions. The job also is to set the right example, to live, you know, a life that will make the people proud. I told the people of Iowa when I was campaigning that if I had the honor of serving this office—if I was given the honor of serving the office, I would uphold the honor and dignity of the office. And I'll do so for 4 more years.

Thank you, sir. Yes, ma'am. They've got a mike coming right behind you. Hope this one works.

Presidential Debates/North Korea

Q. I would like to know when you go in to the next debate, if you would just stand up and tell that opponent of yours exactly what you're saying today. We're behind you. We pray for you.

The President. Thank you. Thank you. You know, I appreciate that. It's what you—that's about the only thing to do, is tell people what you believe. I—the last debate was really interesting. I mean, here we had a fellow who said he's for a "global test" for U.S. policy, that he thought my decision on Korea was the wrong decision. See, let me talk about Korea right quick so you understand.

There was a bilateral relations between Korea and the United States before I became President. We had an agreement. We paid the Koreans, gosh, I think about $350 million in fuel oil in the hopes that they would honor the agreement they made. Part of the agreement was they couldn't enrich uranium, and they enriched uranium. And my administration found it out. So I figured that, well, if one bilateral relations failed, maybe the next one won't work, and tried to do something differently to get other nations—you might remember, I've been criticized as being a unilateralist, but here I am putting together a multilateral effort—that means more than one voice saying to the North Koreans, give up your weapons. And perhaps the most important voice in that discussion is China.

And we went down to Crawford, and Jiang Zemin, the predecessor of Hu Jintao, and I sat down at the table and said, "Why don't we come up with a joint declaration, a joint statement that says that the United States and China both think the Korean Peninsula ought to be nuclear-weapons-free." And he agreed, and we said that. And so now we have China involved, not one voice but two. And then we got South Korea involved and then Japan involved and Russia involved. There's five countries now saying the same thing.

So this time if Kim Chong-il decides to renege on any agreement, he's not only showing disrespect for the United States, he's showing disrespect for China. And my opponent says we need to go back to the old days of unilateralism with North Korea. It failed once. It will fail again. And so I believe we're on the right path to convincing North Korea to give up its weapons.

Let me say what else in that last debate. I'm glad you brought up that last debate. He also said—they asked him, was it a mistake to go in—or he said it was a mistake to go into Iraq. And then when asked, "Well, then is it a mistake to have our troops dying there," he said, "No." You cannot have it both ways. You can't have it both ways. And if you try to have it both ways, it sends mixed messages. See, what I—listen, I understand tactics change. But what shouldn't change is someone's core beliefs, because of politics.

All right, I'm getting the hook. I got to go back to Washington. I can't thank you enough for coming. I'm honored to have your

support. Work hard, and we'll carry Iowa and win a great victory in November.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:21 p.m. at the 7 Flags Event Center. In his remarks, he referred to Stan Thompson, candidate for Congress in Iowa's Third Congressional District; Iowa State Auditor David A. Vaudt; Jeff Lamberti, president, and Stewart E. Iverson, Jr., majority leader, Iowa State senate; David Roderer, Iowa State chairman, Bush-Cheney, '04, Inc.; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; former President Jiang Zemin and President Hu Jintao of China; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Proclamation 7824—Fire Prevention Week, 2004

October 4, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Fire Prevention Week is an opportunity for all Americans to learn more about how to avoid fires, as well as how to best respond in case of such an emergency. By making fire safety a priority, we can help limit the devastating effects of fires and enhance the safety of our citizens.

A large majority of fire deaths in the United States occur in the home. This year's theme, "It's Fire Prevention Week: Test Your Smoke Alarms," reflects the importance of installing and maintaining working smoke alarms on every floor of the home. As vital early warning systems, smoke alarms reduce the chances of a fire becoming fatal by approximately 50 percent. Americans can also take steps to reduce the chance of a fire ever starting. These include using electrical devices safely, avoiding overloading circuits, and carefully operating stoves, fireplaces, and space heaters. We should also supervise our children and educate them about the dangers of lighters and matches, exercise care in the storing of firewood and other flammable materials, and obey local burning laws. More information about these and other measures is available from the National Fire Protection Association and the Department of Homeland Security's United States Fire Administration.

Firefighters are among our greatest heroes, and they risk their lives each day to protect our citizens and our homeland. All Americans owe them a debt of gratitude for their courage and dedication. By working to prevent disasters and by being prepared, we support firefighters as they serve communities across our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 3 through October 9, 2004, as Fire Prevention Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate activities and to undertake efforts to prevent fires and their tragic consequences.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 7.

Proclamation 7825—Child Health Day, 2004

October 4, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Parents play a vital role in keeping their children healthy, and when it comes to helping children make right choices, there is work for all Americans to do. Parents, teachers, faith-based and community groups, and government leaders are working together to counter the negative influences in today's culture, highlight the benefits of healthy lifestyles, and educate children about the consequences of their actions.

By promoting good nutrition and regular physical activity, parents help their children perform better in the classroom and live healthy lives. To encourage healthy families,

my Administration is helping young people learn the simple steps to live better through the HealthierUS Initiative and the President's Challenge awards program. These programs encourage young people to eat a nutritious diet rich in fruits and vegetables and to set aside time every day for physical activity, such as playing sports, biking, or even helping with yard work at home. Encouraging healthy habits early in life helps give children a head start and gives them the best chance of reaching their potential.

Our youth are challenged with tough choices. We must continue to promote responsibility among our Nation's young people by providing them with the knowledge they need to make the right decisions concerning drug and alcohol use. My Administration supports education programs that address these issues. Through the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and Drug-Free Communities Program, we are working to ensure that young people understand the serious risks and consequences of substance abuse. And in order to help kids who need help, my Administration supports random drug testing as a prevention tool. We have also increased support for abstinence-only education programs, including grants for community and faith-based organizations, because abstinence is the only sure way to prevent teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

We all have an important role in giving America's children a healthy start in life by teaching them that the decisions they make today will affect them for the rest of their lives. By helping them make the right choices, we better prepare them for a hopeful future.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 18, 1928, as amended (36 U.S.C. 105), has called for the designation of the first Monday in October as "Child Health Day" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 4, 2004, as Child Health Day. I call upon families, schools, child health professionals, faith-based and community organizations, and governments to help all our children discover the rewards of good health and wellness.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 7.

Proclamation 7826—To Implement the 2004 United States-Israel Agreement on Trade in Agricultural Products

October 4, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. On April 22, 1985, the United States entered into the Agreement on the Establishment of a Free Trade Area between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Israel (the "FTA"), which the Congress approved in the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985 (the "FTA Act") (19 U.S.C. 2112 Note).

2. In order to maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to agricultural trade with Israel, on July 27, 2004, the Government of the United States entered into an agreement with the Government of Israel concerning certain aspects of trade in agricultural products during the period January 1, 2004, through December 31, 2008 (the "2004 Agreement"). The 2004 Agreement reflects an effort by the United States and Israel to address, through 2008, their continuing differences over the meaning of certain provisions in the FTA governing access for United States agricultural products to Israel's market.

3. Section 4(b) of the FTA Act provides that, whenever the President determines that it is necessary to maintain the general level

of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to Israel provided for by the FTA, the President may proclaim such withdrawal, suspension, modification, or continuance of any duty, or such continuance of existing duty-free or excise treatment, or such additional duties as the President determines to be required or appropriate to carry out the FTA.

4. Pursuant to section 4(b) of the FTA Act, I have determined that it is necessary, in order to maintain the general level of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions with respect to Israel, to provide through the close of December 31, 2008, access into the United States customs territory for specified quantities of certain agricultural products of Israel free of duty or certain fees or other import charges.

5. Section 604 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2483) (the "Trade Act") authorizes the President to embody in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) the substance of the relevant provisions of that act, and of other acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder, including removal, modification, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 4 of the FTA Act and section 604 of the Trade Act, do hereby proclaim:

(1) In order to implement aspects of the 2004 Agreement with the Government of Israel, concerning certain aspects of trade in agricultural products, the HTS is modified as provided in the Annex to this proclamation.

(2) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive Orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

(3) The modifications to the HTS made by the Annex to this proclamation shall be effective with respect to goods that are the product of Israel and are entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after January 1, 2004, and the tariff treatment set forth therein shall be effective as provided in such Annex through December 31, 2008.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 6, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 7.

Statement on the Death of Gordon Cooper

October 5, 2004

Gordon Cooper was a pioneer of human space exploration. He was one of the original seven Mercury astronauts, logging more than 225 hours in space throughout his distinguished career. He also served his country in the United States Air Force and received numerous awards including the Distinguished Flying Cross. Laura joins me in sending our condolences to the entire Cooper family.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Reinstate the Draft

October 5, 2004

I applaud the House of Representatives for soundly rejecting the "Reinstate the Draft" bill, sponsored by Congressman Rangel in the House and Senator Hollings in the Senate. If this bill were presented to me, I would veto it. America's all-volunteer military is the best in the world, and reinstating the draft would be bad policy. We have increased pay and benefits to ensure that our troops have the resources they need to fight and win the war on terror. I want every American to understand that, as long as I am President, there will be no draft.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 163.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Budget Request To Support Comprehensive Response and Recovery Efforts After Hurricane Jeanne

October 5, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

On September 8th, I signed into law Public Law 108–303, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2004, which provided $2 billion in supplemental funds for hurricane-related disaster relief. On September 14th and 27th, I submitted additional supplemental requests totaling $10.2 billion to continue immediate assistance to address the impact of Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne.

Due to the availability of better estimates regarding the damage resulting from Hurricane Jeanne, I am requesting additional emergency funds from the Congress to address this natural disaster. I now ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests, totaling $691.2 million, for additional emergency resources for the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, the Interior, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs; as well as the Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, and International Assistance Programs.

I hereby designate these specific proposals in the amounts requested herein as emergency requirements. These additional requests will support response and recovery efforts to address the critical needs associated with the effects of Hurricane Jeanne. In addition to this enacted and requested emergency funding, Federal agencies will continue to use existing resources and programs for response and recovery efforts from all recent hurricanes and storms.

I urge the Congress to limit this emergency funding to those items directly related to the recovery efforts from the impact of these recent major disasters and to act expeditiously on this and my pending emergency supplemental requests.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

October 6, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. Please be seated. Thank you all. Thank you. Please be seated. Gosh, thanks for such a great welcome. I appreciate it. It's great to be in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. It's such an honor to be back here. I'm glad to be in a part of the world where people work hard, they love their families. Good to be in a part of the world where people like to hunt and fish.

My regret is that Laura is not with me. She is——

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. I know it. [*Laughter*] That's generally the reaction. [*Laughter*] Kind of like, "Why didn't you stay home and send Laura." [*Laughter*] You're not going to believe this; it's a true story—or kind of true. [*Laughter*] I said, "Will you marry me?" She said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." [*Laughter*] Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. Laura—when Laura speaks, people see a compassionate, decent, strong First Lady.

I had my morning briefing today with someone you're familiar with. That would be your former Governor Tom Ridge. So Laura sends her best, as does Tom Ridge.

Today I traveled with Don Sherwood. As we say in Crawford, he's a good one. He's a great Member of the United States House of Representatives. I'm proud to work with him. He cares deeply about the people of this important part of the State of Pennsylvania. He is a fine Representative who brings integrity to the office. I appreciate your service.

I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I want to thank the candidates who are here. I want to thank the

grassroots activists who are here. I want to thank you for what you're going to do, which is to put up the signs, make the phone calls, turn out the vote. With your help, there's no doubt in my mind we'll carry Pennsylvania.

I am sure many of you stayed up to watch the Vice Presidential debate last night. America saw two very different visions of our country and two different hairdos. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick my Vice President for his hairdo. I picked him for his judgment, his experience—a great Vice President. I'm proud to be running with him.

In less than a month, you'll have a chance to vote for Dick Cheney and me. Think about that—less than a month. I'm looking forward to coming down the stretch with a positive, strong message. As your President, I've worked to make America a more hopeful and more secure place. I've led our country with principle and resolve. And that's how I'll lead our Nation for 4 more years.

When I took office in 2001, the bubble of the nineties had burst. Our economy was headed into a recession. And because of the attacks of September the 11th, nearly a million jobs were lost in 3 months. It was a dangerous time for our economy. People were warning of potential deflation and depression. But I acted.

To stimulate the economy, I called on Congress to pass historic tax relief, which it did, without my opponent's "yes" vote. The tax relief was the fuel that got our economy growing again. Thanks to the efforts of our citizens and the right policies in the right place at the right time, we put the recession behind us and America is creating jobs once again.

We have built a broad and solid record of accomplishment. In the past year, the United States of America has added about 1.7 million new jobs, more than Germany, Japan, Great Britain, Canada, and France combined. Real tax—real after-tax income—that's the money in your pocket to spend on groceries or house payments and rent—is up more than 10 percent since I took office. Homeownership is at an alltime high in America. Farm income is up. Small businesses are flourishing. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in the United States of America.

Ours is a record of accomplishment. Thanks to reforms in education, math and reading scores are increasing in our public schools. Ten million students will get record levels of grants and loans to help with college. Low-income seniors are getting $600 extra to help pay for medicine this year, in their drug discount cards. And soon Medicare will offer prescription drug coverage to every senior in America. We have made America a stronger, more hopeful country, and we're just getting started.

Listen, I like to travel our country because I have a chance to talk to our fellow citizens. I understand the challenges facing our Nation. People are living and working in a time of change. Workers switch jobs more than they used to, which means they often need new skills and benefits they can take with them from job to job. We're in a changing world, yet the systems of Government haven't changed. I'm running for 4 more years to change the systems of Government so people can better realize the great dreams of America.

Making sure people realize those dreams, it's essential that our education systems work. We're going to raise the standards and expectations in every high school. We'll invest in our Nation's fine community colleges so workers can be prepared to fill the jobs of the 21st century. We're going to expand health savings accounts so people can pay health expenses with tax-free money and keep the savings if they change jobs. We're going to improve Social Security to allow younger workers to own a piece of their own retirement, a nest egg that the Washington politicians can never take away.

To keep this economy strong and competitive, we must make sure America is the best place in the world to start a business and to do business. To make sure America is the best place in the world to start a business, our taxes must be low. Congress must make the tax relief we passed permanent. To keep jobs here, there need to be less regulations on our small businesses. To keep jobs here, we must pass an energy plan that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of energy. To make sure jobs exist here in America, we

got to do something about these junk and frivolous lawsuits. Trial lawyers shouldn't be getting rich at the expense of our entrepreneurs and our doctors.

My opponent and I have a very different view on how to grow our economy. Let me start with taxes. I have a record of reducing them. He has a record of raising them.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted in the United States Senate to increase taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's a lot. [*Laughter*] He voted for higher taxes on Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In 1997, he voted for the formula that helped cause the increase in Medicare premiums.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. My opponent was against all of our middle class tax relief. He voted instead to squeeze another $2,000 per year from the average middle class family.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now the Senator is proposing higher taxes on more than 900,000 small-business owners. My opponent is one of the few candidates in history to campaign on a pledge to raise taxes. [*Laughter*] And that's the kind of promise a politician from Massachusetts usually keeps. [*Laughter*]

He says the tax increase is only for the rich. You've heard that kind of rhetoric before. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason—to stick you with the tab. The Senator is not going to tax you because we're going to win in November.

The Senator and I have different views on another threat to our economy, frivolous lawsuits. He's been a part of the Washington crowd that has obstructed legal reform again and again. Meanwhile, all across America, unfair lawsuits are hurting small businesses. Lawsuits are driving up health care costs. Lawsuits are threatening ob-gyns all across our country. Lawsuits are driving good doctors out of practice. We need a President who will stand up to the trial lawyers in Washington, not put one on the ticket.

The Senator and I have very different views on health care. I've got a specific plan to help Americans find health care that's available and affordable, lawsuit reform, association health care plans to help our small businesses, health savings accounts, community health centers to help the poor, expanding health care for low-income children, using technology to drive down the cost of health care.

He has a different vision. Under his health plan, 8 million Americans would lose the private insurance they get at work, and most would end up on a Government program. Under his plan, 8 out of 10 people who get new insurance will get it from the Federal Government. My opponent's proposal would be the largest expansion of Government-run health care ever. And when Government pays the bills, Government makes the rules. His plan would put bureaucrats in charge of dictating coverage, which could ration care and limit your choice of doctor. Senator Kerry's proposal would put us on the path to "Clinton-care."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'll make sure doctors and patients are in charge of the decisions in America's health care.

The Senator and I have different views on Government spending. Over the years, he's voted 274 times to break the Federal budget limits. And in this campaign, Senator Kerry has announced more than $2 trillion of new spending. And that's a lot of money, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [*Laughter*]

During his 20 years as a Senator, my opponent hasn't had many accomplishments. Of the hundreds of bills he submitted, only five became law. One of them was ceremonial. But to be fair, he's earned a special distinction in Congress. The nonpartisan National Journal analyzed his record and named John Kerry the most liberal Member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And when the competition includes Ted Kennedy—[*laughter*]—that's really saying something. [*Laughter*] I'm telling you, I know that bunch. [*Laughter*] It wasn't easy for my opponent to become the single most liberal Member of the Senate. You might even say, it was hard work. [*Laughter*] But he earned that title by voting for higher taxes, more regulation, more junk

lawsuits, and more Government control over your life.

And that sets up a real difference in this campaign. My opponent is a tax-and-spend liberal. I'm a compassionate conservative. My opponent wants to empower Government. I want to use Government to empower people. My opponent seems to think all the wisdom is found in Washington, DC. I trust the wisdom of the American people.

Our differences are also clear on issues of national security. When I took office in 2001, threats to America had been gathering for years. Then on one terrible morning, the terrorists took more lives than America lost at Pearl Harbor. Since that day, we have waged a global campaign to protect the American people and bring our enemies to account. Our Government has trained over a half a million first-responders. We tripled spending on homeland security. Law enforcement and intelligence have better tools to stop terrorists, thanks to the PATRIOT Act, which Senator Kerry voted for but now wants to weaken.

The Taliban regime that sheltered Al Qaida is gone from power, and the people of Afghanistan will vote in free elections this very week. A black market network that provided weapons materials to North Korea and Libya and Iran is now out of business. Libya, itself, has given up its weapons of mass destruction programs. We convinced Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to join the fight against the terrorists. And more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

After September the 11th, America had to assess every potential threat in a new light. Our Nation awakened to an even greater danger, the prospect that terrorists who killed thousands with hijacked airplanes would kill many more with weapons of mass murder. We had to take a hard look at everyplace where terrorists might get those weapons, and one regime stood out, the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

We knew the dictator had a history of using weapons of mass destruction, a long record of aggression, and hatred for America. He was listed by Republican and Democrat administrations as a state sponsor of terrorists. There was a risk, a real risk, that Saddam Hussein would pass weapons or materials or information to terrorist networks. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

After 12 years of United Nations Security Council resolutions, we gave him a final chance to come clean and listen to the demands of the free world. When he chose defiance and war, our coalition enforced the just demands of the world. And the world is better off with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

We've had many victories in the war on terror, and that war goes on. Our Nation is safer but not yet safe. To win this war, we must fight on every front. We'll stay on the offensive against terrorist networks, striking them before they come to America to hurt us. We'll confront governments that support terrorists and could arm them, because they're equally guilty of terrorist murder.

And our long-term victory requires confronting the ideology of hate with freedom and hope. Our victory requires changing the conditions that produce radicalism and suicide bombers and finding new democratic allies in a troubled part of the region. America is always more secure when freedom is on the march. And freedom is on the march in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere. There will be good days, and there will be bad days in the war on terror. But every day we will show our resolve, and we will do our duty. This Nation is determined. We will stay in the fight until the fight is won.

My opponent agrees with all this, except when he doesn't. [*Laughter*] Last week in our debate, he once again came down firmly on every side of the Iraq war. [*Laughter*] He stated that Saddam Hussein was a threat and that America had no business removing that threat. Senator Kerry said our soldiers and marines are not fighting for a mistake but also called the liberation of Iraq a "colossal error." He said we need to do more to train Iraqis, but he also said we shouldn't be spending so much money over there. He said he wants to hold a summit meeting so he can invite other countries to join what he calls "the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time." [*Laughter*] He said terrorists are pouring across the Iraqi border but

also said that fighting those terrorists is a "diversion" from the war on terror. [*Laughter*] You hear all that, and you can understand why somebody would make a face. [*Laughter*]

My opponent's endless back-and-forth on Iraq is part of a larger misunderstanding. In the war on terror, Senator Kerry is proposing policies and doctrines that would weaken America and make the world more dangerous. Senator Kerry approaches the world with a September the 10th mindset. He declared in his convention speech that any attack will be met with a swift and certain response. That was the mindset of the 1990s, while Al Qaida was planning the attacks on America. After September the 11th, our object in the war on terror is not to wait for the next attack and respond but to prevent attacks by taking the fight to the enemy.

In our debate, Senator Kerry said that removing Saddam Hussein was a mistake because the threat was not imminent. The problem with this approach is obvious. If America waits until a threat is at our doorstep, it might be too late to save lives. Tyrants and terrorists will not give us polite notice before they launch an attack on our country. I refuse to stand by while dangers gather. In the world after September the 11th, the path to safety is the path of action. And I will continue to defend the people of the United States of America. [*Applause*] Thank you all. Thank you all.

My opponent has also announced the Kerry doctrine, declaring that American actions in the war on terror must pass a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Under this test, America would not be able to act quickly against threats, because we'd be sitting around waiting for our grade from other nations and other leaders. [*Laughter*]

I have a different view. America will always work with allies for security and peace. But the President's job is not to pass a "global test." The President's job is to protect the American people. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

When my opponent first ran for Congress, he argued that American troops should be deployed only at the directive of the United Nations.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, he's changed his mind. [*Laughter*] No, he has, in all fairness. But it is a window into his thinking. Over the years, Senator Kerry has looked for every excuse to constrain America's action in the world. These days he praises America's broad coalition in the Persian Gulf war. But in 1991, he criticized those coalition members as, quote, "shadow battlefield allies who barely carry a burden." Sounds familiar. At that time, he voted against the war. If that coalition didn't pass his "global test," clearly, nothing will. [*Laughter*] This mindset would paralyze America in a dangerous world. I'll never hand over America's security decisions to foreign leaders and international bodies that do not have America's interests at heart.

My opponent's doctrine has other consequences, especially for our men and women in uniform. My opponent supports the International Criminal Court, which would allow unaccountable foreign prosecutors and judges to put American soldiers on trial.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That would be a legal nightmare for our troops. My fellow citizens, as long as I'm your President, Americans in uniform will answer to the officers and laws of the United States, not to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. The Senator speaks often about his plan to strengthen America's alliances, but he's got an odd way of doing it. In the middle of the war, he's chosen to insult America's fighting allies by calling them "window dressing" and the "coalition of the coerced and the bribed." The Italians who died in Nasiriyah were not window dressing. They were heroes in the war on terror. The British and the Poles at the head of the multinational divisions in Iraq were not coerced or bribed. They have fought and some have died in the cause of freedom. These good allies and dozens of others deserve the respect of all Americans, not the scorn of a politician.

Instead, the Senator would have America bend over backwards to satisfy a handful of governments with agendas different from our

own. This is my opponent's alliance-building strategy: Brush off your best friends; fawn over your critics. And that is no way to gain the respect of the world.

My opponent says he has a plan for Iraq. Parts of it should sound pretty familiar. It's already known as the Bush plan. [*Laughter*] Senator Kerry suggests we train Iraqi troops, which we've been doing for months. Just this week, Iraqi forces backed by coalition troops fought bravely to take the city of Samarra from the terrorists and Ba'athists and insurgents. Senator Kerry is proposing that we have—that Iraq have elections. [*Laughter*] Those elections are already scheduled for January. [*Laughter*] He wants the U.N. to be involved in those elections. Well, the U.N. is already there.

There was one element of the Senator Kerry's plan—it's a new element. He's talked about artificial timetables to pull our troops out of Iraq. He sent the signal that America's overriding goal in Iraq would be to leave, even if the job isn't done. That may satisfy his political needs, but it complicates the essential work we're doing in Iraq. The Iraqi people need to know that America will not cut and run when their freedom is at stake. Our soldiers and marines need to know that America will honor their service and sacrifice by completing the mission. And our enemies in Iraq need to know that they can never out last the will of America.

Senator Kerry assures us that he's the one to win a war he calls a "mistake," an "error," and a "diversion." But you can't win a war you don't believe in fighting. On Iraq, Senator Kerry has a strategy of retreat; I have a strategy of victory. We've returned sovereignty to the Iraqi people ahead of schedule. We've trained about 100,000 Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other security personnel, and that total will rise to 125,000 by year-end. We've already allocated more than $7 billion for reconstruction efforts, so more Iraqis can see the benefits of freedom. We're working with a coalition of some 30 nations to provide security. Other nations are helping with debt relief and reconstruction aid for Iraqis. And although the terrorists will try to stop them, Iraq will hold free elections in January because the Iraqi people want and deserve to govern themselves.

I understand some Americans have strong concerns about our role in Iraq. I respect the fact that they take this issue seriously, because it is a serious matter. I assure them we're in Iraq because I deeply believe it is necessary and right and critical to the outcome of the war on terror. If another terror regime were allowed to emerge in Iraq, the terrorists would find a home, a source of funding, vital support. They would correctly conclude that free nations do not have the will to defend themselves. If Iraq becomes a free society at the heart of the Middle East, an ally in the war on terror, a model of hopeful reform in a region that needs hopeful reform, the terrorists will suffer a crushing defeat, and every free nation will be more secure.

This is why Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman calls Iraq a "crucial battle in the global war on terrorism." This is why Prime Minister Tony Blair has called the struggle in Iraq "the crucible in which the future of global terrorism will be determined." This is why the terrorists are fighting with desperate cruelty. They know their own future is at stake. Iraq is no diversion. It is the place where civilization is taking a decisive stand against chaos and terror, and we must not waver.

Unfortunately, my opponent has been known to waver. [*Laughter*] His well-chosen words and rationalizations cannot explain why he voted to authorize force against Saddam Hussein and then voted against money for bullets and vehicles and body armor for the troops on the ground. He tried to clear it all up by saying, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." Now he says he made a mistake in how he talked about the war. The mistake here is not what Senator Kerry said. The mistake is what he did in voting against funding for Americans in combat. That is the kind of wavering a nation at war can never afford.

As a candidate, my opponent promises to defend America. The problem is as a Senator for two decades, he has built a record of weakness. The record shows he twice led efforts to gut our intelligence service budgets. The record shows he voted against many of the weapons that won the cold war and are vital to current military operations. And the

record shows he has voted more than 50 times against missile defense systems that would help protect us from the threats of a dangerous world.

I have a record in office as well, and all Americans have seen that record. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember trying to console people coming out of that rubble, and a guy grabbed me by the arm, and he looked me in the eye and said, "Do not let me down." These men and women—the men and women there took it personally. You took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I wake up every morning thinking about how to make our country more secure. I have acted again and again to protect our people. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Twenty-seven days from today, Americans will make a critical choice. My opponent offers an agenda that is stuck in the thinking and the policies of the past. On national security, he offers the defensive mindset of September the 10th, a "global test" to replace American leadership, a strategy of retreat in Iraq, and a 20-year history of weakness in the United States Senate. Here at home, he offers a record and an agenda of more taxes and more spending and more litigation and more Government control over your life.

The race for President is a contest for the future, and you know where I stand. I'm running for President to keep this Nation on the offensive against terrorists, with the goal of total victory. I'm running for President to keep this economy moving so every worker has a good job and quality health care and a secure retirement. I'm running for President to make our Nation a more compassionate society, where no one is left out, where every life matters.

I have a hopeful vision. I believe this young century will be liberty's century. We'll promote liberty abroad, protect our country, and build a better world beyond the war on terror. We'll encourage liberty at home to spread the prosperity and opportunity of America to every corner of our country. I will carry this message to my fellow citizens in the closing days of this campaign, and with your help, we will win a great victory on November the 2d.

God bless. God bless our great country. Thank you all. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:13 a.m. at the Kirby Center for the Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks in Farmington Hills, Michigan

October 6, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. You know what I think, Bill? I think that with the help of these good folks here, we'll carry Michigan. We'll win a great victory in November, and I'll be there in the White House when you come back.

Listen, I appreciate you coming. Thanks for coming today. We're coming down the stretch. I'm here to ask for your vote, and I'm here to ask for your help. Register your friends and neighbors. Make sure you don't overlook discerning Democrats, people like Zell Miller. Get people headed to the polls, and remind them, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Speaking about the Vice President, I'm sure some of you stayed up to watch the debate last night. America saw two different visions of our country and two different hair styles. [*Laughter*] America saw why I picked Dick Cheney to be the Vice President. He's strong. He's steady. He knows what he's talking about.

Laura sends her best. She's warming up for the Jay Leno show. He's lucky to have her as a guest, and I'm lucky to have her as a wife. She is a great First Lady. Perhaps the most important reason to put me back into office, is so that Laura will be the First Lady for 4 more years.

I appreciate Bill Laimbeer for being here. I also want to thank another great leader and sports figure of your great State, Bo

Schembechler is with us today as well. I appreciate you bringing Cathryn.

I also want to thank the attorney general, Mike Cox. My longtime friend Brooks Patterson is with us today. I thank Ruth Johnson and other State and local officials. I want to thank Betsy DeVos and all the grassroots activists who are here. I appreciate what you're doing. I appreciate the hard work you're doing.

I want to thank Mary Spangler, the chancellor of the Oakland Community College, and Ed Callaghan, who's the president. Thank you all for having me.

I want to thank my friend Mark Wills, country and western singer, for being here. Most of all, thank you all for being here.

In less than a month, you'll have a chance to vote for Dick Cheney and me. As your President, I've worked to make America more hopeful and more secure. I've led our country with principle and resolve, and that is how I'll lead our Nation for 4 more years.

When I took office in 2001, the bubble of the nineties had burst and our economy was headed into a recession. Because of the attacks of September the 11th, nearly a million jobs were lost in 3 months. It was a dangerous time for our economy. People were warning of potential deflation and depression, but I led. To stimulate the economy, I called on Congress to pass historic tax relief, which it did. The tax relief was the fuel that got our economy growing again. Thanks to the efforts of our citizens and the right policies at the right place at the right time, we put the recession behind us, and America is creating jobs again.

We have built a broad and solid record of accomplishment. In the past year, the United States of America has added about 1.7 million new jobs, more than Germany, Japan, Great Britain, Canada, and France combined. Real tax—real after-tax income, the money in your pocket that you have to spend on groceries and house payments and rent, is up more than 10 percent since I took office. Homeownership is at an alltime high in America. The farm economy is strong. The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well. The small-business sector of America is doing well.

Thanks to our reforms in education, math and reading scores are increasing in our public schools. Under my budget, 10 million students will get record levels of grants and loans to help with college. Low-income seniors are getting $600 extra to help pay for medicine this year, and soon Medicare will offer prescription drug coverage to every senior in America. We've made America stronger, and we're just getting started.

Listen, I understand we're living in changing times—people are living and working in a time of change. Workers switch jobs more often than they used to, which means they need, oftentimes need new skills and new benefits that they can take with them from job to job. Ultimately, in our competitive global economy, it's our people that make America successful, and that's why I believe education is so vital.

So we'll raise standards and expectations for every public school in America. We'll invest in our Nation's fine community colleges, like this one right here, so they prepare workers for the jobs of the 21st century. We'll expand health savings accounts so people can pay health expenses with tax-free money. We'll improve Social Security to allow younger workers to own a piece of their retirement, a nest egg that Washington, DC, politicians can never take away.

To keep our economy strong and competitive, we must make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. That's why we need to make our tax relief permanent for our small businesses and our families. To keep jobs here, we need to cut needless regulations. To keep jobs here, we need to pass an energy plan that makes our Nation less dependent on foreign sources of energy. To make sure we got jobs here, we need to stop these junk and frivolous lawsuits that badger our employers.

My opponent and I have a very different view as how to grow our economy. We have a difference of opinion. Let's start with taxes. I have a record of reducing them. He has a record of raising them.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted in the United States Senate to raise taxes 98 times.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That sounds like a lot to me. He voted for higher taxes on Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted in 1997 for the formula that has helped cause the increases in Medicare premiums.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Remember when I proposed middle class tax relief in order to get this economy going? I asked Congress to raise the child credit, reduce the marriage penalty, and create a new 10-percent bracket for lower-income Americans. He voted against every one of those taxes to help the middle class.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now he's proposing higher taxes—higher taxes on about 900,000 small-business owners.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Remember when you hear him say "tax the rich," a lot of small businesses pay individual income taxes. As a matter of fact, 90 percent of small businesses do. And we've heard that rhetoric, haven't we, "tax the rich"? Yes. That's why the rich hire lawyers and accountants, to stick you with the bill, to stick those small-business owners with the bill. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to win Michigan and win in November.

My opponent is one of the few candidates in history to campaign on a pledge to raise taxes. That's the kind of pledge a politician from Massachusetts usually keeps. [*Laughter*]

We have a different view on another threat to our economy, frivolous lawsuits. Senator Kerry has been a part of the Washington crowd that has obstructed legal reform again and again. Meanwhile, all across America, unfair lawsuits are hurting small businesses. Lawsuits are driving up the cost of your health care. Lawsuits are driving good doctors out of the practice of medicine. We need a President who will stand up to the trial lawyers in Washington, not put one on the ticket.

The Senator and I have very different views on health care. I believe we ought to help the poor with community health centers. We ought to fully subscribe to the children's health program for low-income families. We need association health plans to help our small businesses afford insurance. We need health savings accounts to help our workers and small businesses be able to better afford insurance. We need to make sure we use technology to help drive down the cost of medicine.

He has a different view. Under his health plan, 8 million Americans would lose the private insurance they get at work and most would end up on a Government program.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Under his plan, 8 out of 10 people who get new insurance will get it from the Federal Government. My opponent's proposal would be the largest expansion of Government-run health care ever. And when Government pays the bills, Government makes the rules. His plan would put bureaucrats in charge of dictating coverage, which could ration your care and limit your choice of doctors. My opponent's plan would put us on the path to "Hillary-care."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. In everything we do to reform health care, we will make sure the decisions are made by patients and doctors, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

My opponent and I have different views on spending—spending your money. Over the years he's voted 274 times to break Federal budget limits. And in this campaign, he's announced more than $2 trillion in new spending, and that's a lot of money, even for somebody from Massachusetts.

During his 20 years as a Senator, my opponent hasn't had many accomplishments. Of the hundreds of bills he submitted, only five became law. One of them was ceremonial. But to be fair, he's earned a special distinction in Congress. The nonpartisan National Journal analyzed his record and named John Kerry the most liberal Member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And when the competition includes Ted Kennedy, that's really saying something. [*Laughter*] Listen, it wasn't easy for my opponent to become the single most liberal Member of the Senate. You might even say it was hard work. [*Laughter*] But he earned that title. He earned it by voting for higher taxes, more regulation, more junk

lawsuits, and more Government control over your life.

And that sets up one of the real differences in this campaign. My opponent is a tax-and-spend liberal. I'm a compassionate conservative. My opponent wants to empower Government. I want to use Government to empower citizens. My opponent seems to think all the wisdom is found in Washington, DC. I trust the wisdom of the American people.

Our differences are also clear on issues of national security. When I took office in 2001, the threats to America had been gathering for years. Then on one terrible morning, terrorists took more lives than America lost at Pearl Harbor. Since that day, we've waged a global campaign to protect the American people and bring our enemies to account. Our Government has trained over a half a million first-responders and tripled spending on homeland security. Law enforcement and intelligence have better tools to stop terrorists, thanks to the PATRIOT Act, which Senator Kerry voted for but now wants to weaken.

The Taliban regime that sheltered Al Qaida is gone from power, and the people of Afghanistan will vote in free elections this coming Saturday. A black market network that provided weapons materials to North Korea and Libya and Iran is now out of business. Libya, itself, has given up its weapons of mass destruction. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are joining the fight against the terrorists, and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice.

After September the 11th, America had to assess every potential threat in a new light. Our Nation awakened to an even greater danger, the prospect that terrorists who killed thousands with hijacked airplanes would kill many more with weapons of mass murder. We had to take a hard look at everyplace where terrorists might get those weapons.

One regime stood out, the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. We knew the dictator had a history of using weapons of mass destruction, a long record of aggression and hatred for America, and was listed by Republican and Democrat administrations as a state sponsor of terror. There was a risk that Saddam Hussein would pass weapons or materials or information to terrorists networks. In a world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.

After 12 years of United Nations Security Council resolutions, we gave him a final chance to come clean and prove his disarmament. He chose defiance. And when he did, he chose war. Our coalition enforced the just demands of the free world, and the world is better off today with Saddam Hussein in a prison cell.

We have had many victories in the war on terror, and that war goes on. Our Nation is safer but not yet safe. To win this war, we must fight on every front. We will stay on the offensive against terrorist networks. We will strike them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. We will confront governments that support terrorists and could arm them, because they're equally guilty of terrorist murder.

And our long-term victory requires confronting the ideology of hate with freedom and hope. Our long-term victory says we must change the conditions that produce radicalism and suicide bombers. Our long-term security depends upon finding new democratic allies in a troubled region of the world.

America is always more secure when freedom is on the march, and freedom is on the march in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and elsewhere. There will be good days, and there will be bad days in the war on terror. But every day we will show our resolve and do our duty to future generations of Americans. This Nation is determined. We will stay in the fight until the fight is won.

My opponent agrees with all this, except when he doesn't. [*Laughter*] Last week in——

Audience members. Flip-flop! Flip-flop! Flip-flop!

The President. Last week in our debate, he once again came down firmly on every side of the Iraq war. [*Laughter*] He stated that Saddam Hussein was a threat and that America had no business removing that threat. Senator Kerry said our soldiers and marines are not fighting for a "mistake," but he also called the liberation of Iraq a "colossal error."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He said we need to do more to train Iraqis, but he also said we shouldn't be spending so much money over there. He said he wants to hold a summit meeting, so he wants—so he can invite other countries to join what he calls the "wrong war at the wrong place at the wrong time." He said terrorists are pouring across the Iraqi border but also said that fighting those terrorists is a "diversion" from the war on terror. If you hear all that, you can understand why somebody would make a face. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. My opponent—my opponent's endless back-and-forth on Iraq is part of a larger misunderstanding. In the war on terror, Senator Kerry is proposing policies and doctrines that would weaken America and make the world more dangerous. Senator Kerry approaches the world with a September the 10th mindset. He declared in his convention speech that any attack will be met with a swift and a certain response. This was a mindset of the 1990s, while Al Qaida was planning attacks on America. After September the 11th, our object in the war on terror is not to wait for the next attack and respond, but to prevent attacks by taking the fight to the enemy.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. In our debate, Senator Kerry said that removing Saddam was a mistake because the threat was not imminent. The problem with this approach is obvious. If America waits until a threat is at our doorstep, it might be too late to save lives. Tyrants and terrorists will not give us polite notice before they launch an attack on our country. I refuse to stand by while dangers gather.

My opponent has also announced the Kerry doctrine, declaring that American actions in the war on terror must pass a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Under this test, America would not be able to act quickly against threats because we'd be sitting around waiting for our grade from other nations. I have a different view. America will always work with our allies for security and peace, but the President's job is not to pass a "global test." The President's job is to protect the American people.

When my opponent first ran for Congress, he argued that American troops should be deployed only at the directive of the United Nations.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, look, he has changed his mind, but it is a window into his thinking. Over the years, Senator Kerry has looked for every excuse to constrain America's actions in the world. These days he praises America's broad coalition in the Persian Gulf war, but in 1991, he criticized those coalition members as, quote, "shallow battlefield allies who barely carry a burden." Sounds familiar. And that time, he voted against the war. If that coalition didn't pass his "global test," clearly nothing will. His mindset would paralyze America in a dangerous world. I will never hand over America's national security decisions to foreign leaders or international bodies.

The Kerry doctrine has other consequences, especially for our men and women in uniform. The Senator from Massachusetts supports the International Criminal Court——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——which would allow unaccountable foreign prosecutors and judges to put American soldiers on trial.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And that would be a legal nightmare for our troops. My fellow citizens, as long as I'm your President, Americans in uniform will answer to the officers and laws of the United States, not to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

The Senator speaks often about his plan to strengthen America's alliances, but he's got an odd way of going about it. In the middle of the war, he's chosen to insult America's fighting allies by calling them "window dressing" and a "coalition of the coerced and the bribed." The Italians who died in Nasiriyah were not window dressing. They were heroes in the war on terror. The British and Poles at the head of multinational divisions in Iraq were not coerced or bribed. They have fought and some have died in the cause of freedom. These good allies and dozens of

others deserve the respect of all Americans, not the scorn of a politician.

Instead, the Senator would have America bend over backwards to satisfy a handful of governments with agendas different from our own. This is my opponent's alliance-building strategy: Brush off your best friend; fawn over your critics. And that's no way to gain respect in this world.

My opponent says he has a plan for Iraq. Parts of it sound pretty familiar. It's already known as the Bush plan. Senator Kerry suggests we train Iraqi troops. That's what we've been doing for months. Senator Kerry is proposing that Iraq have elections. Those elections are scheduled for January. He wants the U.N. to be involved in those elections. The U.N. is already there. There's one new element of Senator Kerry's plan. He talked about artificial timetables to pull the troops out of Iraq. He has sent the signal that America's overriding goal in Iraq would be to leave, even if the job isn't done. That may satisfy his political needs, but it complicates the essential work we're doing in Iraq.

The Iraqi people need to know that America will not cut and run, with their freedom at stake. Our soldiers and marines need to know that America will honor their service and sacrifice by completing the mission. Our enemies in Iraq need to know that they can never out last the will of America. Senator Kerry assures us that he's the one to win a war he calls a "mistake" or an "error" and a "diversion." But you can't win a war you don't believe in fighting. On Iraq, Senator Kerry has a strategy of retreat; I have a strategy for victory.

We returned sovereignty to the Iraqi people ahead of schedule. We've trained about 100,000 Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other security personnel. And the total will rise to 125,000 by the end of this year. These people are fighting for their freedom. They want to be free. They're being trained to be able to fight and stop these terrorists from preventing the march of freedom. We've allocated more than $7 billion for reconstruction efforts so more Iraqis can see the benefit of freedom. We're working with a coalition of some 30 nations to provide security. Other nations are helping with debt relief and reconstruction aid for Iraqis. And although terrorists will try to stop them, Iraq will hold free elections in January, because the Iraqi people want to be free.

I understand some Americans have strong concerns about our role in Iraq. I respect the fact that they take this issue seriously. It's a serious matter. I assure them we're in Iraq because I deeply believe it is necessary and right and critical to the outcome of the war on terror and critical for long-term peace for our children and grandchildren.

If another terror regime were allowed to emerge in Iraq, the terrorists would find a home and a source of funding and a source of support, and they would correctly conclude that free nations do not have the will to defend themselves. If Iraq becomes a free society at the heart of the Middle East, an ally in the war on terror, a model for hopeful reform in that region, the terrorists will suffer a crushing defeat.

And that is why Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman calls Iraq "a crucial battle in the global war on terrorism." And that is why Prime Minister Tony Blair has called the struggle in Iraq "the crucible in which the future of global terrorism will be determined." That is why the terrorists are fighting with desperate cruelty. They know their future is at stake. Iraq is no diversion. It's a place where civilization is taking a decisive stand against chaos and terror, and we must not waver.

Unfortunately, my opponent has been known to waver. His well-chosen words and rationalizations cannot explain why he voted to authorize force against Saddam Hussein and then voted against money for bullets and vehicles and body armor for the troops on the ground.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He tried to clear it up by saying, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." Now he says he made a mistake in how he talked about that vote. The mistake is not what Senator Kerry said. The mistake is what Senator Kerry did in voting against funding for our troops in combat, and that is the kind of wavering a nation at war cannot afford.

As a candidate, my opponent promises to defend America. The problem is, as a Senator for two decades, he has built a record

of weakness. The record shows he twice led efforts to gut our intelligence service budget. The record shows he voted against many of the weapons that won the cold war and are vital to current military operations. And the record shows he has voted more than 50 times against missile defense systems that would help protect us from the threats of a dangerous world.

I have a record in office as well, and all Americans have seen that record. Not all Americans agree with me, but they know where I stand.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats yelling to me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." A guy grabbed me by the arm; he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I've acted again and again to make America safe. I will never relent in defending the people of this country, whatever it takes.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. Twenty-seven days from today, Americans will make a critical choice. My opponent offers an agenda that is stuck in the thinking and the policies of the past. On national security, he offers the defensive, reactive mindset of September the 10th, a "global test" to replace American leadership, a strategy of retreat in Iraq, and a 20-year history of weakness in the Senate. Here at home, he offers a record and an agenda of more taxes and more spending and more litigation and more Government control over your life.

A race for President is a contest for the future, and you know where I stand. I'm running for President to keep this Nation on the offensive against the terrorists, with the goal of total victory. I'm running for President to keep this economy moving so every worker has a good job and quality health care and a secure retirement. I'm running for President to make our strong Nation a more compassionate society, where no one is left out and every life is valued.

And I have a hopeful vision. I believe this young century will be liberty's century. We'll promote liberty abroad to protect our country and to build a better world beyond the war on terror. We'll encourage liberty at home to spread the prosperity and opportunity to every corner of this great land. I will carry this message to my fellow citizens in the closing days of this campaign, and with your help, we'll carry Michigan and win a great victory in November.

Thank you all for coming. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:22 p.m. at the Oakland Community College-Orchard Ridge Campus. In his remarks, he referred to former professional basketball player Bill Laimbeer; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; television talk show host Jay Leno; Glenn W. "Bo" Schembechler, former head coach, University of Michigan football team; Michigan State Attorney General Mike Cox; Oakland County Chief Executive L. Brooks Patterson; Michigan State Representative Ruth Johnson; Betsy DeVos, chairman, Michigan Republican Party; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Statement on Senate Passage of the "National Intelligence Reform Act"

October 6, 2004

I commend the Senate for acting in a bipartisan way to pass landmark legislation that will help us meet our goal to better protect the American people by strengthening the intelligence community. The "National Intelligence Reform Act" is consistent with my proposal to establish a strong National Intelligence Director with full budget authority and the new National Counterterrorism Center. America is a nation at war, and this legislation is another important step forward as we do everything in our power to defeat the terrorist enemy and protect the American people. I urge the House to act quickly so that Congress can resolve any differences and send legislation to me as soon as possible.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 2845.

Proclamation 7827—German-American Day, 2004

October 6, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Generations of German immigrants and their descendents have helped build America and chart its course through history. On German-American Day, we recognize these proud citizens for their important contributions to America and honor the bond between two great nations.

German Americans have been part of America's history since its earliest days, beginning with the establishment of the Jamestown Colony in 1607 and the arrival of German Quakers and Mennonite families in 1683. Many of these early settlers came to America seeking religious freedom and the chance to develop a community based on tolerance and respect for all people. During the westward expansion of the United States, many German families helped settle communities, found cities, and develop the agriculture industry. Over time, the core beliefs of these freedom-loving individuals helped define the liberty and opportunity that our country represents. Their traditions of public debate and active citizenship influenced important social issues such as land reform, abolition, workers' rights, and women's suffrage.

This week, our Government is breaking ground for a new Embassy in historic Berlin, exemplifying America's support of a unified Germany. Sharing a common commitment to freedom, peace, and prosperity, the citizens of Germany and America can build a better future for the benefit of all nations.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 6, 2004, as German-American Day, and I encourage all Americans to recognize the contributions of our citizens of German descent.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:12 a.m., October 8, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 12.

Remarks on Departure for Wausau, Wisconsin

October 7, 2004

Report on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction

Chief weapons inspector Charles Duelfer has now issued a comprehensive report that confirms the earlier conclusion of David Kay that Iraq did not have the weapons that our intelligence believed were there.

The Duelfer report also raises important new information about Saddam Hussein's defiance of the world and his intent and capability to develop weapons. The Duelfer report showed that Saddam was systematically gaming the system, using the U.N. Oil for Food Programme to try to influence countries and companies in an effort to undermine sanctions. He was doing so with the intent of restarting his weapons program, once the world looked away.

Based on all the information we have today, I believe we were right to take action, and America is safer today with Saddam Hussein in prison. He retained the knowledge, the materials, the means, and the intent to produce weapons of mass destruction, and he could have passed that knowledge on to our terrorist enemies. Saddam Hussein was a unique threat, a sworn enemy of our country, a state sponsor of terror, operating in the world's most volatile region. In a world after September the 11th, he was a threat we had to confront, and America and the world are safer for our actions.

The Duelfer report makes clear that much of the accumulated body of 12 years of our intelligence and that of our allies was wrong, and we must find out why and correct the flaws. The Silberman-Robb Commission is now at work to do just that, and its work is important and essential. At a time of many

threats in the world, the intelligence on which the President and Members of Congress base their decisions must be better, and it will be. I look forward to the intelligence reform commission's recommendations, and we will act on them to improve our intelligence, especially our intelligence about weapons of mass destruction.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Charles Duelfer, Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence; David Kay, former CIA Special Advisor for Strategy Regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He also referred to the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, chaired by former Senator Chuck Robb and Judge Laurence Silberman. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks. The report of September 30 was entitled "Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD."

Remarks in Wausau, Wisconsin

October 7, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming out. It's great to be back in Wisconsin. Listen, thanks for coming. It's great to be back in Wausau. It's an honor that so many came out to say hello. I'm so thankful you're here. Next time I come back I'd like to do some hunting and fishing.

I'm here to ask for your vote. I'm here to ask for your help. We're getting close to the stretch run here in this campaign, and I'd like to encourage you to get your friends and neighbors to register to vote and then go to the polls. And remind them when they head to the polls, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, a better America, to put Dick Cheney and me back in office.

Laura sends her very best. Last time I saw her, I was watching the Jay Leno rerun this morning. [*Laughter*] I am—you know, when I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. The American people have gotten to see what I know: She is a strong, compassionate, great First Lady for this country.

I was proud of the job my Vice President did the other night.

I appreciate Tommy Thompson. He's a great leader. He's in my Cabinet, as you recall. And I appreciate you training him so well.

I'm glad to be here on the stage with the next United States Senator from Wisconsin, Tim Michels. You got a good one in Tim, and I hope you put him in office. It's important. And make no mistake about it, with your help, he's going to win.

I want to thank Jack Voight, who is the State treasurer. I want to thank the assembly speaker, John Gard, who is with us, Scott Walker is over here from Milwaukee County. I appreciate him coming. We call him Scott W. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the mayor of Wausau for being here, Mayor Tipple. Mr. Mayor, I'm proud you're here. My only advice, and I know you didn't ask for any—[*laughter*]—but my only advice is to fill the potholes. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Scott Klug for emceeing this event, and I appreciate my friend Stan Orr. I want to thank John Conlee, the singer who was here. I appreciate you coming, John, and thanks for entertaining everybody.

I particularly want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. Those are the people who put up the signs and make the phone calls and do all the hard work. You never hardly get thanked. I'm here to thank you for what you're going to do. I know with your hard work, I know when we turn out the vote, we will carry Wisconsin this year and win a great victory in November.

I have a strong, positive message. As your President, I have worked hard to make America more hopeful and more secure. I have led our country with principle and resolve, and that's how I'll lead this Nation for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. When I took office—I want you to remind your friends and neighbors about what we have been through as a country. When I took office, the bubble of the 1990s had burst, and our economy was

heading into recession. Because of the attacks of September the 11th, nearly a million jobs were lost in 3 months. It was a dangerous time for our economy. You might remember there were people warning of potential deflation and depression.

But we acted. To stimulate the economy, I called on the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief, which it did. And that tax relief was the fuel that got our economy growing again, thanks to the effort of our citizens and the right policies in the right place at the right time. That recession is behind us, and we're creating jobs again.

In the past year, the United States has added about 1.7 million new jobs, more than Germany, Japan, Great Britain, Canada, and France combined. Real after-tax income—the money you keep in your pocket—is up more than 10 percent since I took office. Homeownership is at an alltime high in America today. Small businesses are flourishing. Today we learned that America's welfare rolls are the lowest in 34 years. Math and reading scores are increasing in our public schools. Ten million students will get record levels of grants and loans to help with college. We have modernized Medicare so our seniors will get a prescription drug coverage in 2006.

And this farm economy is strong. I understand farming is a priority in Wisconsin, and I made it a priority in my administration. My opponent has taken a different view. In the Senate career he's consistently voted against the interests of your dairy farmers.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He supported the Northeast Dairy Compact.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That puts your farmers at a distinct disadvantage. I believe farm policy should treat all farmers fairly. That's why I was proud to sign a good farm bill. We've opened up foreign markets for your products. We've increased funding for ethanol and biodiesel. Farm income is at an alltime high.

I know that the Milk Income Lost Contract program is important to the dairy farmers here in Wisconsin. The milk program is set to expire next fall. I look forward to working with Congress to reauthorize the program so Wisconsin dairy farmers and dairy farmers all across this country can count on the support they need.

We have made America stronger, and we're just getting started. Listen, we live in a time of change. It's a changing economy. People are changing jobs and careers often. Women are working inside the home and outside the home. And yet the fundamental systems of our Government haven't changed. They're stuck in the past.

I understand a hopeful society is one in which we challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations in our public schools and raise the standards and trust the local people to make sure they make the right decisions for the schools. We have an achievement gap in America that's closing, thanks to our education reforms, and we're not going to turn back.

We're going to invest in our Nation's fine community colleges so they prepare workers for the jobs of the 21st century. In a time of change, because people are changing jobs often, we'll expand health savings accounts so people can pay health expenses tax-free and keep the savings if they change jobs.

We'll improve Social Security. Listen, if you're—I remember the 2000 campaign here in Wisconsin. You might remember it too. They said, "If old George W. gets elected, he's going to take away your Social Security check." You remember those ads? Well, you got your check, didn't you? And you're going to get it again.

Nobody is going to take away the check of those who are on Social Security, and the baby boomers are in good shape. But we better worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. In order to make sure Social Security is available for them, younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own money and set up a personal savings account that they can call their own, that the Government will not take away.

To keep our economy strong and competitive, we got to make sure America is the best place in the world to do business. That means we've got to have that tax relief we passed permanent. That means we got to do something about these needless regulations on small businesses. This country needs an energy plan if we want to keep jobs here in

America. I submitted a plan to the Congress over 2 years ago. It's a plan that calls for more conservation, the use of renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel. It's a plan that says we can use our coal and natural gas wisely without hurting the environment. It's a plan that says if we want jobs here in America, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We got to do something about the frivolous and junk lawsuits here in America that hurt our employers and make it hard to get jobs. We've got—my opponent and I have got different views on all these issues. We've got some fundamental differences on issues like taxes. See, I have a record of reducing them. He's got a record of raising them.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted in the United States Senate 98 times to raise taxes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That sounds like he's developing a habit. [*Laughter*] He voted for higher taxes on Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted for the 1997 formula that helped cause the increases in Medicare.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He's against all the tax relief we've passed. You might remember that tax relief. We raised the child credit. We reduced the penalty on marriage. We created a 10-percent bracket for low-income Americans. He voted against them all.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. My opponent is one of the few candidates in history to campaign on a pledge to raise taxes.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And unfortunately, that's the kind of promise more politicians keep. [*Laughter*] He says the tax relief—the tax increase is only for the rich. Now, you've heard that before. The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to stick you with the bill. [*Laughter*] The good news is we're not going to let him tax us this year. We're going to carry Wisconsin and win a great victory in November.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. The Senator and I have different views on health care, fundamentally different views on health care. I believe that we ought to make health care available and affordable. We'll make it available by making sure low-income Americans can go to a community health center to get good preventative care and good primary care. We'll make it available to make sure our children's health programs for low-income Americans are expanded to every corner of this country. We'll make it affordable by doing something about these frivolous lawsuits that are running good doctors out of business and running your costs up. We'll make it affordable by promoting technologies which will help wring out excessive costs in health care.

We'll make it affordable by allowing small businesses to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so they can buy insurance at the same discounts big companies can buy insurance. We'll make it affordable by expanding health savings accounts, and that stands in stark contrast to my opponent's plan. Under his plan, 8 million Americans would lose the private insurance they get at work and would end up on a Government program.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Under his plan, 8 out of 10 people who'd get new insurance would get it from the Federal Government.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. My opponent's proposal would be the largest expansion of Government-run health care ever.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And you know something, when the Government pays the bills, it makes the rules. His plan would put bureaucrats in charge of dictating coverage, which could ration your care and limit your choice of doctors. What I'm telling you is he's putting us on the path to "Hillary-care."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I've got a different idea. In all we do to improve health care, we will make sure the decisions are made by patients and doctors, not by bureaucrats in our Nation's Capital.

During his 20 years as a Senator, my opponent hasn't had many accomplishments. Of the hundreds of bills he submitted, only five became law. That's in 20 years of service.

One of them was ceremonial. But to be fair, he has earned a special distinction in the Congress. The nonpartisan National Journal analyzed his record and named John Kerry the most liberal Member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, that's saying something when the competition is people like Ted Kennedy. [*Laughter*] It wasn't easy for him to be the single most liberal Member of the Senate. You might say it took hard work. [*Laughter*] But he earned that title by voting for higher taxes and more regulation and more junk lawsuits and more Government control of your life. And that's one of the real differences of this campaign. My opponent is a tax-and-spend liberal. I'm a compassionate conservative. My opponent wants to empower Government. I want to use Government to empower our citizens. My opponent seems to think all the wisdom is found in Washington, DC. I trust the wisdom of the American people.

You know, I say this, we're living in a changing world, and we do. There's some things that won't change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And I stand for appointing judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

Our differences are also clear on issues like national security. When I took office in 2001, threats to America had been gathering for years. Then, on one terrible morning, the terrorists took more lives than America lost at Pearl Harbor.

Since that day, we have waged a global campaign to protect the American people and bring our enemies to account. Our Government has trained over a half a million first-responders. We've tripled the spending for homeland security. Law enforcement and intelligence have better tools to stop the terrorists, thanks to the PATRIOT Act, which my opponent voted for but now wants to weaken.

The Taliban regime that sheltered Al Qaida is gone from power. And in 2 days' time, 10 million people, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in a Presidential election that will take place in 2 days' time. Think about that. Think about what's going on there. The black market network thatweapons materials to North Korea and Libya and Iran is now out of business. Libya has given up its weapons of mass destruction programs. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have joined the fight, and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice. We have led, many have followed, and America and the world are safer.

After September the 11th, America had to assess every potential threat in a new light. Our Nation awakened to even a greater danger, the prospect that terrorists who killed thousands with hijacked airplanes would kill many more with weapons of mass murder. That's the threat we face. And so we had to take a hard look at every place where terrorists might get those weapons.

And one regime stood out, the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. We knew the dictator had a history of using weapons of mass destruction, a long aggression and hatred for America, and was listed by Republican and Democratic administrations as a state sponsor of terror. There was a risk that Saddam would pass weapons or materials or information on to terrorist networks. And that was a risk, after September the 11th, this Nation could not afford to take. After 12 years of United Nations Security Council resolutions, we gave him a final chance to come clean and to listen to the demands of the free world. He chose defiance and he chose war, and the world is better off with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell.

Last week in our debate, Senator Kerry once again came down firmly on every side of the Iraq war. He stated that Saddam Hussein was a threat and that America had no business removing that threat. Senator Kerry said our soldiers and marines are not fighting for a "mistake" but also called the liberation of Iraq a "colossal error." He said we need to do more to train Iraqis but also said we shouldn't be spending so much money over there. He said he wants to hold a summit

meeting so he can invite other countries to join what he calls the "wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You hear all that, and you can understand why somebody would make a face. [*Laughter*]

Just a short time ago, my opponent held a little press conference and continued his pattern of overheated rhetoric. He accused me of deception. He's claiming I misled America about weapons when he, himself, cited the very same intelligence about Saddam's weapons programs as the reason he voted to go to war. Two years ago this Saturday, back when he was for the war—[*laughter*]—my opponent said on the floor of the United States Senate, and I quote, "Saddam Hussein sitting in Baghdad, with an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction is a different matter. In the wake of September the 11th, who among us can say with any certainty to anybody that those weapons might not be used against our troops or against allies in the region." John Kerry went on: "Who can say that this master of miscalculation will not develop a weapon of mass destruction even greater, a nuclear weapon, then re-invade Kuwait or push the Kurds out, attack Israel, any numbers of scenarios to try to further his ambitions. Can we afford to ignore that possibility that Saddam Hussein might accidentally as well as purposely allow those weapons to slide off to one group or another in a region where weapons are the currency or the trade." End quote.

Now today my opponent tries to say I made up reasons to go to war. Just who is the one trying to mislead the American people?

We have many victories in this war on terror so far, and the war goes on. Our Nation is safer but not yet safe. To win this war, we must fight it on every front. We will stay on the offensive against the terrorist networks. We will defeat them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

We will confront governments that support terrorists and could arm them because they're equally guilty of terrorist murder. And our long-term victory requires confronting the ideology of hate with freedom and hope, changing the conditions that produce radicalism and suicide bombers, and finding new democratic allies in a troubled region of the world. You see, America is always more secure when freedom is on the march.

And freedom is on the march in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and elsewhere. There will be good days and there will be bad days in the war on terror. But every day, we will show our resolve, and we will do our duty. This Nation is determined. We will stay in the fight until the fight is won.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. My opponent and I have very different views on conducting the war on terror. Senator Kerry approaches the world with a September-the-10th mindset. Think about this. He declared at his convention speech that any attack will be met with a swift and certain response. That was the mindset of the 1990s, while Al Qaida was planning the attacks on America. After September the 11th, our object in the war on terror is not to wait for the next attack and respond but to prevent attacks by taking the fight to the enemy.

In our debate, Senator Kerry said that removing Saddam Hussein was a mistake because a threat was not imminent. Think about that. The problem with his approach is obvious. If America waits until a threat is at our doorstep, it might be too late to save lives. You see, terrorists and tyrants will not give us polite notice before they launch an attack on our country. I refuse to stand by while dangers gather.

My opponent also announced the Kerry doctrine, declaring that Americans' actions in the war on terror must pass a "global test."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Under this test, America would not be able to act quickly against threats because we'd be sitting around waiting for a grade from other nations. I have a different view. America will always work with our allies for security and peace, but the President's job is not to pass an international test. The President's job is to protect the American people.

When my opponent first ran for Congress, he argued that American troops should be

deployed only at the directive of the United Nations.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You probably think I'm making that up. [*Laughter*] I thought it was wrong when I first read it. [*Laughter*] Now, to be fair, he's changed his mind, but it is a window into his thinking. [*Laughter*] Over the years, Senator Kerry has looked for every excuse to constrain America's action in the world. These days he praises America's broad coalition in the Persian Gulf war. But in 1991—I want to remind you what he said—he criticized coalition members as, quote, "shadow battlefield allies who barely carry a burden." That sounds familiar, doesn't it? And that time he voted against the war. If that coalition didn't pass his "global test," nothing will pass his "global test." [*Laughter*]

The Kerry doctrine has other consequences, especially for our men and women in uniform. The Senator from Massachusetts supports the International Criminal Court ——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——which would allow unaccountable foreign prosecutors and foreign judges to put American soldiers on trial.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You probably think I'm making that up. See, that would be a legal nightmare for our troops. My fellow citizens, as long as I'm your President, Americans in uniform will answer to the officers and law of the United States, not to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

We have a different point of view on how to build alliances. The Senator speaks about his plan to strengthen America's alliances, but he's got an odd way of going about it. In the middle of the war, he's chosen to insult our fighting allies by calling them "window dressing" and "a coalition of the coerced and the bribed."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Well, the Italians who died in Nasiriyah were not window dressing. They're heroes in the war on terror, as far as we're concerned. The British and the Poles at the head of the multinational divisions in Iraq were not coerced or bribed. They fought and some have died in the cause of freedom and peace. These good allies and dozens of others deserve the respect of all Americans, not the scorn of a politician. Instead, the Senator would have America bend over backwards to satisfy a handful of governments with different agendas. This is my opponent's alliance-building strategy: Brush off your best friend and fawn over your critics. And that's no way to gain respect in this world.

My opponent says he has a plan for Iraq, and part of it should sound pretty familiar because it's already known as the Bush plan. [*Laughter*] Senator Kerry suggests we train Iraqi troops. That's what we've been doing for months. [*Laughter*] He's proposing that Iraq have elections. That's what's going to happen in January. He says the U.N. ought to be involved in the elections. Well, the U.N. is already there. [*Laughter*]

There was one new element of Senator Kerry's plan. He talks about artificial timetables to pull our forces out of Iraq. You see, he sent a signal that America's overriding goal in Iraq would be to leave, even if the job isn't done.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That may satisfy his political needs, but his words complicate the essential work we're doing in Iraq. See, the Iraqi people need to know that America will not cut and run when their freedom is at stake. Our soldiers and marines need to know that America will honor their service and sacrifice by completing the mission. Our enemies in Iraq need to know that they can never outlast the will of America. Senator Kerry assures us that he's the one to win a war he calls a "mistake," a "diversion," an "error." But you can't win a war you do not believe in fighting for. On Iraq, Senator Kerry has a strategy for retreat, and I have a strategy for victory.

We returned the sovereignty to the Iraqi people ahead of schedule. We have trained and equipped about 100,000 Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other security personnel, and the total will rise to 125,000 by the end of the year. See, the strategy ought to be clear. The Iraqi people must stand up and fight for their freedom. They must be the ones that take the hard risk. We've allocated about $7 billion for reconstruction efforts so more Iraqis can see the benefit of freedom.

We're working with the coalition of some 30 nations to provide security. Other nations are helping with debt relief. And although the terrorists will try to stop them, Iraq will hold free elections in January.

I believe in the power of liberty to transform nations. I believe that freedom can bring peace. You know, I talk to Prime Minister Koizumi quite often—he's the Prime Minister of Japan. I know we've got some veterans here—first of all, I want to say thanks to all the veterans who set such a great example. I suspect we may have some veterans of World War II with us. My dad was such a veteran. There's a veteran right there. The reason I bring that up is because it wasn't all that long ago in the march of history we were fighting Japan. My dad was there; others were there as well. They were the sworn enemy of America.

After World War II, Harry Truman believed that liberty could transform an enemy into a friend. So we worked hard to help Iraq with democracy—I mean, Japan with democracy. And as a result, I sit down at the table today talking with the leader of a former enemy about how to keep the peace we all want. Think about that. That's what's happening in the world today. A free Iraq will help us keep the peace. A free Iraq will be an ally in the war against terror. And someday, an American President will be sitting down at the table with a duly elected leader from Iraq, talking about how to keep the peace. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

These are important times. It is important we complete the mission successfully. I know some of the citizens of our country have concerns over Iraq. I respect that. We ought to take this issue seriously because it's a serious matter.

I assure them we're in Iraq because I believe it is necessary for the—to get a positive outcome in this war on terror. That's what I believe. If another terror regime were allowed to emerge in Iraq, the terrorists would find a home and a new source of funding. They would correctly conclude that free nations do not have the will to defend themselves. If Iraq becomes a free society in the heart of the Middle East, we'll have an ally and a model for other nations to look at.

That's why Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman calls Iraq "a crucial battle in the global war on terrorism." That's why Prime Minister Tony Blair called the struggle in Iraq "the crucible in which the future of global terrorism will be determined." That's why the terrorists are fighting with desperate cruelty, because they know their own future is at stake. Iraq is no diversion. It is a place where civilization is taking a decisive stand against chaos and terror, and we must not waver.

Unfortunately, my opponent has been known to waver. [*Laughter*] His well-chosen words and his rationalizations cannot explain why he voted to authorize force against Saddam Hussein and then voted against money to support our troops in combat.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He actually tried to clear it up initially by issuing the famous quote, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] I've been in politics for some time. I've never heard one of them put it that way before. [*Laughter*] He now says he made a mistake in how he talked about his vote. The mistake is not what Senator Kerry said. The mistake is what he did in voting against funding for our troops in harm's way. That is the kind of wavering a nation at war can never afford.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It helped shape my thinking about my duty to protect you. I'll never forget that day. There were workers in hardhats there yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I was doing my best to console those who were coming out of that rubble. They had grime and dirt all over them. I looked a guy right in the eye—he had bloodshot eyes—and he said, "Don't let me down."

I wake up every morning since that day thinking about how to better protect America. I will never relent in doing what is necessary to secure this country and to protect you, whatever it takes.

A race for President is a contest for the future, and you know where I stand. I'm running for President to keep this Nation on the offensive against terrorists with the goal of total victory and peace for our children and our grandchildren. I'm running for President

to keep this economy moving so every worker has a good job and quality health care and a secure retirement. I'm running for President to make our strong Nation a more compassionate society where no one is left out, because I believe everybody counts and everybody matters.

I have a hopeful vision—I have a optimistic vision about this country. You would have one too if you've seen what I've seen. I've seen the spirit of America under good times and bad times. I've seen the great character of this Nation rise up to help a fellow citizen who hurts. I've seen strangers put their arms around another person and say, "I love you, brother." "I love you, sister. What can I do to help you?"

I believe this young century will be liberty's century. We'll promote liberty abroad to protect our country and build a better world beyond terror. We'll encourage liberty here at home to spread prosperity and opportunity to every part of this land. I'm going to carry this message to my fellow citizens in these closing days of this campaign. I'm looking forward to it, and with your help, we'll carry Wisconsin and win a great victory on November the 2d.

Thank you all for coming. I'm glad you're here. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:19 at Marathon Park. In his remarks, he referred to television talk show host Jay Leno; John Gard, speaker, Wisconsin State Assembly; Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker; Mayor James E. Tipple of Wausau, WI; former Representative Scott L. Klug of Wisconsin; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Proclamation 7828—Leif Erikson Day, 2004

October 7, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 1,000 years ago, Leif Erikson led his crew on a journey across the Atlantic, becoming the first European known to have set foot on North American soil. Every October, we honor this courageous Viking explorer, his historic voyage, and the rich heritage of Nordic Americans.

Immigrants from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden and their descendants have made great contributions to our Nation in the fields of business, politics, the arts, education, agriculture, and other areas. Nordic Americans have also made a significant mark on our country's society and culture, and have helped to establish and define America's most cherished principles. Their energy and spirit have inspired others, and their courage, skill, and determination have played an important role in the development of our country. Today, millions of people in the United States trace their origins to these Nordic countries, and their contributions to America make our country stronger and better.

On this day, we also recognize our longstanding ties to these nations that were home to the ancestors of many Americans. Together, we continue to work to advance prosperity, expand freedom, and increase stability and security in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

To honor Leif Erikson, the courageous son of Iceland and grandson of Norway, and to celebrate our citizens of Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2004, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to honor our rich Nordic-American heritage.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:40 a.m., October 8, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 12.

Memorandum on Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

October 7, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2005–01

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

Pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2601(c)(1), I hereby determine that it is important to the national interest that up to $8 million be made available from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund to meet unexpected urgent refugee and migration needs related to the Burundi refugee repatriation and reintegration. These funds may be used, as appropriate, to provide contributions to international, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations, and, as necessary, for administrative expenses of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

You are authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and the obligation of funds under this authority, and to arrange for the publication of this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Statement on the Terrorist Attacks in Egypt

October 8, 2004

I condemn in the strongest possible terms the vicious terrorist attacks in Egypt yesterday. By targeting Muslims and Jews, Egyptians and Israelis, and women and children, the terrorists have shown their total contempt for all human life and for all human values. These acts show yet again why the civilized world must stand together against the forces of terror and defeat this evil.

On behalf of the American people, I express condolences to all who lost loved ones and to the people of Egypt and of Israel. I commend the cooperation between Israel and Egypt to help the victims and their families. The United States stands ready to provide assistance to the Government of Egypt as it brings the perpetrators of these acts to justice.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Columbus, OH, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Karen Kindron. Upon arrival in Columbus, he began a bus tour.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Mansfield, OH.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Cuyahoga Falls, OH. While en route aboard the bus, he met with leaders of the Fraternal Order of Police.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

The White House announced that on October 1 the President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on August 29–September 16.

The White House announced that on October 1 the President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Depression Ivan on September 16–24.

The White House announced that on October 1 the President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Depression Ivan beginning on September 18 and continuing.

October 3

During the day, the President participated in a debate preparation session.

October 4

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy to congratulate him on the birth of his second grandson, to extend birthday greetings, and to discuss the September 28 release of two Italian hostages held in Iraq. He then had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Des Moines, IA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tony Salem.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Clive, IA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

October 5

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, in the Residence, the President watched the Vice Presidential debate. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Vice President Dick Cheney to discuss the debate.

October 6

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Wilkes-Barre, PA, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteers Blake and Mona Schomas.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Detroit, MI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Robert Eastman. He then traveled to Farmington Hills, MI.

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

October 7

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He then had a telephone conversation with President Hu Jintao of China to discuss China-U.S. relations, the situation in North Korea, economic issues, and China-Taiwan relations.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Finance Minister Adil Abd al-Mahdi of the Iraqi Interim Government.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Wausau, WI, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Delores Milbeck. Later, he traveled to St. Louis, MO.

The President made additional disaster assistance available to Florida by authorizing an increase in the level of Federal funding for Public Assistance projects undertaken as a result of Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Charley and Hurricanes Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne.

The President declared a major disaster in South Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Frances beginning on September 6 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on September 14 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in the U.S. Virgin Islands and ordered Federal aid to supplement Territory and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Jeanne on September 14–17.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on September 16–20.

October 8

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. He also had a telephone conversation with President-elect Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia to congratulate him on his October 4 election victory.

In the evening, at Washington University, the President participated in a debate with Democratic Presidential candidate John F. Kerry.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frederick William Hatfield to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Harold Damelin to be Inspector General of the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward L. Flippen to be Inspector General of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brian David Miller to be Inspector General of the General Services Administration.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, as a Governor on the Board of Governors of the American National Red Cross.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jorge A. Plasencia to be a member of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carolyn L. Gallagher and Louis J. Giuliano to be Governors on the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service.

The President announced his intention to appoint A. Wilson Greene and Katina P. Strauch as members of the National Museum and Library Services Board.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted October 5

Michael Butler,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation for a term expiring October 6, 2008, vice Eric D. Eberhard, term expired.

Ronald Rosenfeld,
of Oklahoma, to be a Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board for the remainder of the term expiring February 27, 2009, vice John Thomas Korsmo, resigned.

Submitted October 7

Harold Damelin,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of the Treasury, vice Jeffrey Rush, Jr., resigned.

Edward L. Flippen,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Corporation for National and Community Service, vice J. Russell George.

Frederick William Hatfield,
of California, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for the term expiring April 13, 2008, vice Thomas J. Erickson, term expired.

Brian David Miller,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, General Services Administration, vice Daniel R. Levinson.

Jorge A. Plasencia,
of Florida, to be a member of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting for a term expiring October 27, 2006, vice Joseph Francis Glennon, term expired.

Withdrawn October 7

James B. Cunningham,
of Pennsylvania, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Vienna office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador, and to be Representative of the United States of America to the International Atomic Energy Agency, with the rank of Ambassador, which were sent to the Senate on April 8, 2004.

Submitted October 8

Carolyn L. Gallagher,
of Texas, to be a Governor of the U.S. Postal Service for the remainder of the term expiring December 8, 2005, vice Erensta Ballard, resigned.

Louis J. Giuliano,
of New York, to be a Governor of the U.S. Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2009, vice Albert Casey.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released October 2

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New York, signed October 1

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New York, signed October 1

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Jersey, signed October 1

Released October 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1308

Statement by the Press Secretary conveying the President's congratulations to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on his victory in the Republic of Indonesia's Presidential election

Fact sheet: President Bush Signs Tax Relief Bill Benefiting Millions of American Families

Released October 5

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 265, H.R. 1521, H.R. 1616, H.R. 1648, H.R. 1658, H.R. 1732, H.R. 2696, H.R. 3209, H.R. 3249, H.R. 3389, H.R. 3768, and S.J. Res. 41

Fact sheet: Providing Needed Relief to Hurricane Ravaged Areas

Released October 6

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4654

Released October 7

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Florida

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to South Carolina

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Minnesota

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to the U.S. Virgin Islands

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Tennessee

Released October 8

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Fact sheet: Elections in Afghanistan

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 4

H.R. 1308 / Public Law 108–311
Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004

Approved October 5

H.R. 265 / Public Law 108–312
Mount Rainier National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2004

H.R. 1521 / Public Law 108–313
Johnstown Flood National Memorial Boundary Adjustment Act of 2004

H.R. 1616 / Public Law 108–314
Martin Luther King, Junior, National Historic Site Land Exchange Act

H.R. 1648 / Public Law 108–315
Carpinteria and Montecito Water Distribution Systems Conveyance Act of 2004

H.R. 1732 / Public Law 108–316
To amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Williamson County, Texas, Water Recycling and Reuse Project, and for other purposes

H.R. 2696 / Public Law 108–317
Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004

H.R. 3209 / Public Law 108–318
To amend the Reclamation Project Authorization Act of 1972 to clarify the acreage for which the North Loup division is authorized to provide irrigation water under the Missouri River Basin project

H.R. 3249 / Public Law 108–319
To extend the term of the Forest Counties Payments Committee

H.R. 3389 / Public Law 108–320
To amend the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 to permit Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards to be made to nonprofit organizations

H.R. 3768 / Public Law 108–321
Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve Boundary Revision Act of 2004

S.J. Res. 41 / Public Law 108–322
Commemorating the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian

H.R. 1658 / Private Law 108–2
Railroad Right-of-Way Conveyance Validation Act of 2004

Approved October 6

H.R. 4654 / Public Law 108–323
To reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 through fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes

US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
Washington DC 20402

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for private use, $300

PRESORTED STANDARD
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
GPO
PERMIT NO. G-26

**********ALL FOR STATE MI

A PD KOERN346M DEC 04 R
MARY KOERNKE
PRO QUEST I&L
PO BOX 1346
ANN ARBOR MI 48106